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# THE FORTNIGHTLY

NOVEMBER, 1947

## MEDIEVALISM AND EUROPEAN UNITY

BY SIR HENRY SLESSER

THE unity of Europe, which is now so eagerly and generally sought, in the past has twice been achieved, though in very different forms. First, under a system of military power, administration and technique, supported later by universal law rationalized by the prevailing Stoic philosophy. Secondly, by a far more subtle and tenuous culture, as pervasive as the first, but far less consciously organized; a congerie of many peoples and tribes without any central domination, a spiritual society held together by a common religion rather than by any strong physical or governmental nexus; that unique civilization compacted of piety and cruelty, learning and ignorance, art and crudity of execution, affluence and destitution, philosophy and gross superstition,—unlike the Roman aggregation of provincial cities, a predominantly rural agricultural polity—the medieval Holy Empire.

To us, in the present jeopardy, this society has more direct interest than the classic one in that, like ours, it was compelled largely to proceed by a method of salvage; unlike ancient Rome, it had to build upon a foundation already long prepared. Rome, which to the early fathers, once it had been converted, was the chosen instrument to spread the Faith, (albeit it had previously been denounced as Babylon) was the synonym of civilization. Culture and philosophy and political theory (of Greek origins mostly), law and administration, learning, art and science, all that went to make life other than barbarous, was her heritage. Her very conquerors sought to imitate her ways; Boethius, the minister of a Gothic Roman king, founded himself upon the teachings of the last great Christian neo-Platonic philosopher and saint, Augustine, and from Boethius derived those Platonic and other philosophic elements which until the rediscovery of Aristotle were to furnish the middle ages with their mental equipment. This resulted in the culminating and eclectic achievement of St. Thomas Aquinas who, indeed, took all extant learning as his province, using it for the only purpose which ultimately concerned him, the greater glory of God.

It is scarcely to be disputed that, in the West, the instrument most potent to preserve Roman life and to extend its culture among the barbarous and half-civilized was the Church. Through its Popes and Bishops in the towns, and evangelical monastic orders in more rural (pagan) village areas, a new Christian society arose. Fighting its way between the Muslim and heretic Arians, by the military triumphs of Clovis, of Pepin, Charlemagne and others the Roman Empire was re-established upon a Catholic basis—orthodox in faith,

looking in administration to an Emperor now avowedly Christian, as the ordinances of the papally consecrated Emperor Charles, dealing as much with spiritual as with secular matters, so clearly show. The physical universality of his Empire, as is well known, did not survive his death. Almost from the first what is now France extorted a practical independence, England also, but the fundamental conception of Rome reborn, a Christian Rome, as a cultural institution had come to stay with varying vigour for at least five hundred years.

Despite superficial disagreements between the secular and spiritual authorities, at all "levels" as we should now say, there is little doubt, when the matter is examined without prejudice, which was the stronger influence. Medieval man was always in fear of the Judgment, his certainty of the perils of damnation never wavered and survived the Protestant Reformation. It was this notion, that few could hope hereafter to enjoy the Beatific Vision, that all would suffer the ordeal and disciplines of Purgatory, that Sin was real and that the Devil was among us, that Angels and celestial powers were interceding for fallen man, which made possible the allegiance given to the Holy Father, to the Bishops and Priests, unarmed and helpless men in an age of violence and very imperfect secular law. Compared with the feudal nobility who were gradually absorbing the lands of the earlier Roman and Gothic commanders and officials, the Church was democratic; many Popes and many of the Hierarchy were of comparatively humble birth. In the priestly order hereditary right, which was gradually establishing itself in the lay world, was unknown. Nepotism and ecclesiastical influence were never so certain as secular inheritance, the Church for the most part stood open to talent and learning, fighting, to quote Gilbert, "was not its trade."

Even Homage, that peculiarly medieval device, and international treaties sought their sanction in religion, as does juridical oath-taking to this day. In brief the medieval system was through and through theocratic. The Ordeal, until abolished by the Church itself, Trial by Battle and the consecrated authority of kings all reposed upon an ecclesiastical foundation.

Another matter, which tended in the earlier medieval period to emphasize its religious nature was the view taken by the Fathers as to the nature of all worldly government, which, they declared, was the fruit of the Fall and man's consequent liability to sin. Slavery and all royal and official governance was thus but a temporary necessity; we detect a similar outlook in the communist writers of our age; once the Kingdom comes, law will be no more and government otiose. Thus, from this viewpoint, administration and power are not in themselves a good, and, being but corrective to sin, came to be regarded as no more than regretful necessities, and, in the tradition of Saint Augustine, themselves tainted with wickedness. Many gospel sayings could be and were cited in support of this final hope of holy anarchy. Those writers who have regarded the constant dispute between Pope and Emperor as a conflict of spiritual and secular have missed the true significance of the quarrel; the Emperor, like the



Pope, claimed a *spiritual* jurisdiction. It was God, who in his consecration had given him the Sword. The sanction for his government and those under him, he claimed, was as spiritual as that of the clergy. The dispute was really about functions. In nothing have the nineteenth century publicists been more astray from the medieval ethos than in their misunderstanding of the Guelph and Ghibelline contentions.

In the thirteenth century, however, largely owing to the renewed study of Aristotle, a change was to come. That philosopher had accepted society as a natural order for man; indeed the Greeks on the whole regard man as only able to achieve his full stature as a member of the city state, and these views, in contradistinction to the notion of law as a protection against sin, were accepted from the Stagyrte, among many other matters, by St. Thomas of Aquin. The renewed study of civil law at Bologna had made this social doctrine already acceptable and it is good law rather than religion which St. Thomas demands of a king, so much so that he who does not govern with justice disentitles himself thereby to the allegiance of his subjects. It must be confessed that St. Thomas follows Aristotle also in the dubious defence of slavery or serfdom, though the age-long argument whether serfdom was to be justified by the natural law or by the law of nations need not detain us. St. Thomas ignores the fact that many of the Stoics, and indeed the early fathers, had denounced slavery, nor can it be said truly that the Church, as such, did much to emancipate the serfs, apologists to the contrary notwithstanding. If any class of Christians fought for their freedom it was the heretical Lollards. Only the citizen was in Greece a free man, and St. Thomas and his followers were willing to make a similar limitation.

It has recently been declared that man will only work when compelled by want or direction. Though the serf was attached to the land he was not a proletarian in the modern sense. Though the compulsion imposed by feudal custom operated to make him yield part of the fruits of his labour to the lord, as the lord in his turn would be required to furnish men at arms to his superior, he could not be deprived of his customary holding.

To compare such subordination with the powers of modern governments would be an error. The duties and rights of the serf and small landholder were defined by usage; custom was the basis of medieval jurisprudence. Legislation in the modern sense was almost unknown in this country; not until the customary services had broken down, largely owing to the effects of the Black Death, were ordinances and laws such as the Statutes of Labourers passed to restrict the tendency of the serf and peasant to wander or find work away from his master; where towns had won rights they were accorded by Charter when not established by practice. St. Thomas in his work on government assumes custom to be the foundation of law. Such a notion, however, was bound to conflict with the growing study and application of the Roman system, itself derived from Byzantium and Justinian, which deprecates even the follow-

ing of case law, by judicial authority, and says that the Emperor alone may make, or alter, laws. Thus, once the Roman Law had taken a hold, the elements of absolutism implicit in it were present; whether the sovereign should or should not be advised by a council or parliament was comparatively unimportant. What we detect in the fourteenth century and onwards is an increasing tendency to interfere with custom by direct edict or legislation. Even in England, where the Roman Law never found a permanent footing, legislation, dealing particularly with matters of land holding, is modifying the older laws, and this is especially noticeable in the time of Edward the First. Municipally, guild regulations are interfering with the older unwritten civic rights.

In the Church canon law plays a very similar part; papal decrees become more numerous and uniformity of liturgy and discipline is enforced. From the fourteenth century we feel that we are passing into an "authoritarian" era. It remains to see how far the change in outlook, as expressed in philosophy and cosmology, can account for this.

To the medieval, it need hardly be emphasized, man is the direct interest of God; each must come separately to judgment, each may partake in the benefits of redemption by the holy sacrifice and the mass, each has an immortal soul, to be saved or damned. Popes and bishops, kings and emperors are all possible candidates for hell fire, as Dante very clearly shows; thus, essentially, the medievalist was a democrat, or at least an egalitarian, however inconsistent with that condition might be his secular treatment of the humble. But then this world, he would say, was not a place for comfort or enjoyment, but for salvation, and there was always the monastery for those, however wealthy, who wished at the expense of their worldly dignity and power to follow their Master. Then again, the earth itself was central to the Universe. The stars, regarded in Aristotelian fashion, revolved in an outer sphere, rotated by angelic forces: below the earth, the infernal region, hell. All were within the creative and sustaining power of God, but for creatures on earth the Natural Law (an inheritance of the Greeks and the Stoics) in particular energized matter in form, life and so the activities of man. The last, being possessed of reason, is also controlled by the "Law of Nations" and his own local municipal law and has, through the Church and revelation and the scriptures, a limited knowledge of the divine law as well. Thus all was explicable; the assertion of Bertrand Russell that the Universe is meaningless, or at any rate that man can never know its meaning, if there is one, would have been denied by the medieval thinkers of all schools. Their reasoning proceeded according to form, being framed upon the logic of Aristotle for the most part. Of change and progress, other than the entelechal development of each creature according to the divine plan, they reckoned nothing. Heaven was unchanging, and the less the things of earth changed the nearer the world resembled heaven; in all this the men of the middle ages were essentially conservative.

Of economics (the consuming interest of modern times), in a Europe pre-



dominantly agricultural, the Church had little to say, save that, as a whole, she regarded all economic questions as a department of ethics. The production of wealth was a minor matter, it is the duty of the rich to endow public buildings and live munificently, niggardliness, "*parvicentia*" is a vice. When trade appears, it also must be regulated on moral grounds, usury is condemned, so also the sale of goods other than at their "just price". The guild is supported by a patron saint, and property, though privately owned, must be used in stewardship, under the virtue known as liberality, to help the less fortunate and enrich society.

"The medievals insisted that all production and gain which did not lead to the good of man was not alone wasteful but positively evil," writes O'Brien in his invaluable essay on medieval economic teaching. In all things Charity rather than the motive of personal gain is encouraged by the prevailing Christian theory; manual labour is honoured and is, indeed, a rule in many monastic orders. The notion of the "classical" economists that competition is the best method of sustaining the community, whether correct or not, is the direct contrary of medieval opinion.

It is notorious that, from the fourteenth century onwards, the ideas and principles of the middle ages were discarded. The concept of a universal Holy Empire yielded to the notion of sovereign independent states, the acceptance of a natural law ceased to find favour—a few years ago a Chancery Judge said that there was no such thing, and a Professor of Law at Cambridge wrote recently of the Law of Nature that it had "long since had its brains knocked out." Philosophy became "emancipated" and, no longer, as with the Schoolmen, sought to defend belief upon rational principles; economics ceased to have any ethical significance and comfort and material power took the place of the Beatific Vision as man's final good. Though a nominal allegiance was given to principles peculiarly Christian, in fact the world was increasingly conducted upon secular considerations. The acceptance of mathematical and experimental knowledge, in what has come to be known as Science, became the sole criterion of truth, and pragmatism and relativity in logic and ontology produced a fundamental scepticism as to the capacity of man to understand anything beyond Universe in flux; all this was considered to be a novelty and sign of progress and emancipation—in reality, in many respects, it was a reversion to the pre-Christian Epicurean conception, to be found in the writings of Lucullus and other materialistic and sceptical philosophers.

This tendency, which has lasted some five hundred years, is now, it is suggested, reaching its last term. Already in Western Europe there are signs of a reversion to an earlier standpoint. Thus in the field of international politics the notion of self sufficient national states is being qualified, and it is occurring to many that it is not true that what may be right on one side of a frontier may be wrong on the other. The preamble to the Charter of the United Nations affirms once more a belief in "the dignity and worth of the human person and

in the equal rights of men and women"; the duty to make recommendations for "promoting respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all" is cast upon the Economic and Social Council—these are notions of natural law which had been declared by Pope Pius XII to have fallen into oblivion and disrespect.

In economics also, regardless of political affiliations, the Manchester school policy of unlimited competition is yielding to moral considerations of protection for the weak and encouragement of vocation and co-operation in industry, and dire need has brought us once more to distinguish between essential and undesirable trades; a contrast markedly medieval. Law once more shows signs of becoming international, both in its civil and criminal aspects; the equality of man is accepted in a manner which only the most advanced of medieval moralists could have conceived possible; in this and many other matters a case could be made for the assumption that already the tide has turned and that the ethos of the last centuries is being abandoned; that Charity is resuming her sway over power as a final regulative factor.

At the same time, it would be superficial to ignore many features of modern life and thought which differ very considerably from the medieval ones. Faith which, it is evident, was the heartblood of the earlier era has not returned. "I have been entrusted with all power, unless, which God forbid, I desert the Faith" was the cry of a recalcitrant emperor of the Middle Ages. To-day religion no longer supports the best parts of society, but, instead, a modernized Stoicism, such as would have found favour with Marcus Aurelius or Seneca, is accepted. Bertrand Russell, whose ultimate views have been quoted, represents, I think, the prevailing opinion of educated people. The ultimate dissolution of organized being, a process continually at work in entropy, is assumed by the great majority, nor, on the material plane, have any valid scientific reasons been given to doubt it. Beliefs in ultimate values of goodness, beauty or truth, existing eternally outside the time-space process, the heritage of Plato, are upheld by few thinkers and at our Universities are unpopular—the reaction from utilitarian progress as an ideal does not appear so far to have found any intellectual or spiritual justification. Our actions would appear to be dictated solely by the regretful consideration that post-medieval principles no longer work and that we must escape as best we may.

Thus, when we hear orations upon European unity, we are constrained to ask ourselves in what does it consist. As at present disclosed it would appear to be limited to the preservation of law and personal freedom and the avoidance of internecine war, important objectives but sadly negative, or is it that the recrudescence of the recognition of Europe as an entity, which is not by any means the same thing as what used to be known as Christendom, though the two are often confused, is but a defence against the challenge of Communism from the east, as Christendom itself was knit by challenge and response from the Arian and the Muslim? If so, it is at a great disadvantage in confronting a



great secular movement which, whether it is to be approved or not, at least has behind it a vigorous faith and a consistent, albeit misguided, philosophy. We cannot avoid the consideration of the challenge of Communism and if we are to meet it we must reckon such assets of the West as have survived centuries of egoistic acquisitiveness and, in trepidation, again cast our balance sheet.

The Bolshevik doctrine which, by persuasion or compulsion, now influences the greater part of Eastern Europe consists of two parts accidentally welded together. If Marx had not studied Hegel, that element in Communism which calls itself the 'materialistic dialectic' might never have arisen; indeed a strong case founded on Christian charity can be made for Communism upon religious assumptions, and throughout the middle ages there were not wanting men, denounced as heretics, who advocated for all an apostolic poverty. It has been said by the orthodox that the early fathers limited their communism to the faithful, in which condition it is still encouraged in the monastic life, but it was a communism sought to be founded upon mutual love. The Russian type is supported, in the view of its believers, by necessity. This deterministic element is the Hegelian contribution. Although Hegel himself in his metaphysic sees the flow from Idea to its *Other* and so to a greater synthesis in terms of Mind (the idea was not with him original), one part of his followers applied this doctrine of "Challenge and Response" to material things, and it was this school which Marx favoured. Having got the principle of 'thing and its opposite' on a philosophic foundation, what easier task than to apply it to the struggle between capital and labour and hence, in his synthesis to the classless society! True to his Hegelian dialectic, he proclaimed this development inevitable. The first stage, the growth of trust and combine from the competition of small traders, has occurred over a wide field, though by no means exclusively; in its turn the State has taken over the trusts (though not, curiously, in Russia where for the most part they never formed) but the classless society is still to seek—so far the result has been, apparently, to throw up a new aristocracy of managers and commissars. So much for Marx; to him must be added the support which the Orthodox Church, always Erastian from Byzantine times, gave to the feudal State of Russia and later to its absolute monarchs. The Church in the eyes of all Russian reformers came to be associated with tyranny, as in our days it has become identified in Spain. As a result, atheism came to be accepted as an emancipating force, yet all the time Communism could have developed as a Christian polity, with more ease to the conscience perhaps than some forms of plutocracy now prevailing in ostensibly Christian countries.

It is interesting to note that the right of property in private hands, now upheld by Catholics as a guarantee of personality, was not defended on that ground by the Schoolmen, but rather on the plea that without hope of gain men would not labour—the compulsion by fear of want.

When, however, we come to liberty and its concomitant rule of law we stand on firmer ground, for here we find a real divergence with regard to the

rights of personality which the Russians, judged only from their own publications, hold as unimportant compared with the welfare of society as a whole, whereas, with all its qualifications it is the view of Western Europe that a society not based upon free persons is not an organic, but a mechanical aggregate. Here the Catholic medieval insistence upon free will, a doctrine in which it disagrees with Calvin, which finds its completest expression in the works of Duns Scotus, laid the basis for that respect for the individual which is lacking among both the Greeks and the Romans. By a paradox the Protestants, who took their stand upon the rights of the person as against the Church, were themselves, more especially if Calvinist, spiritual determinists, and their heresy in this matter has lingered on until the present day. Here, at any rate, the modern Westerner, having defeated the despotic oriental phase to be found in Fascism and its German equivalent, can claim descent from the great medieval Schoolmen. The belief in the liberty of man is consistent with the Christian acknowledgment of the fatherhood of God, but, in fact, the challenge of the Church to the State became feebler as the princes grew in power. Many publicists, Machiavelli and Marsiglio at their head, were found to support the secular monarch and even accord him absolute power. Luther, inconsistently, is of the same opinion, and the doctrine of the Divine right of Kings, as developed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, finding echo in these realms, was similarly a denial on the basic medieval assumption that the State is a convenience, the Church, militant and triumphant, eternal.

All this may be, historically, very true, but still the question arises and will take no denial: is it possible to restore the philosophy, morals and creed of the earlier Europe, based upon credal assumptions which few to-day will find acceptable? We fumble and refuse to face the issue; in our Churches we still pray for rain, regardless of the fact that modern meteorology declines to give any countenance to the petition; we still, despite astronomy and astrophysics believe that in some way this earth is of greater importance than the rest of the universe, and that man, despite the physiologists is something other than an animal, and that, psychology notwithstanding, somehow or other he has a soul—even though Professor James denied it. Thus we are confused, irresolute and self contradictory; a medley of tradition, emotion, scientific scepticism and personal yearning. Above all we differ from the middle ages in doubting, in many cases, the promise of personal immortality.

Is it possible then out of this evasive confusion to refound Western culture, and if so, what manner of culture shall we hope to establish? From the middle ages we may at least borrow the dogma of charity, of personality and of law, possibly of international sovereignty, but it would appear, little more.

Dr. Demant, in his latest work, *The Theology of Society*, has suggested that for a society to be Christian it is not necessary for the logical consequences of a body of dogma concerning the relation of God and Man to be consciously



held by the many. If the prevailing culture will induce a man to act in a Christian way and Christian assumptions are the cultural basis of a society, it may still resist disintegration. No longer are the activities of man, however, he points out, related to God; we are possessed of a functionless ideal such as "full employment", without consideration of the purpose or value of an occupation which is no longer vocational. An internationalism, which merely demands larger areas of governmental power, is useless when the purpose of the nations is not related to worship; in other words, though he does not say so in terms, Dr. Demant would have us recover the dogmatic convictions as to the dependent position of man upon his God which moderns have forgotten—and we may add, of the supreme concept, so long as man lives upon this earth, of the Kingdom of God. So in ethics morality is the effect and not the cause of redemption, but to the modern mind the whole conception of sin and redemption therefrom is almost meaningless. For this we may in part blame the Church itself for inadequacy of teaching and example. Whatever may be the effect of science in the philosophic sphere, in the realm of values, redemption stands as a need of man.

Another weakness in the demand for the unity of Europe is its insistence upon geographical considerations. Much of Europe has departed from its earlier culture, but, on the other hand, the European tradition has spread overseas and is now perhaps as strong in the Americas and the Dominions as it is in England or in France. There is a sense of unreality in these days of rapid communication in stressing these physical proximities which we call Europe and this confusion may prove very injurious to the success of the underlying notion. In the middle ages Christendom was a geographical entity, at times it excluded parts of Spain and, later, of the old area of the Eastern Empire; on the other hand it spread to parts of the Germanies and Scandinavia which had never been a part of the Roman imperium even at its widest extent. It would appear therefore to be impossible, if by Europe a culture is meant, (there are as many Catholics in the United States and Australia as in Western Europe), to restrict it to the western end of a sub-continent. Indeed, notwithstanding Hilaire Belloc, "Europe is the Faith and the Faith is Europe", the medieval notion of Christendom, as in the acceptance of converted Jews or Turks into the family, knew no boundaries of race or area.

At bottom, however, the most essential difference between the medieval and the modern mind lies in the conception of the relationship of reason and faith, for, as St. Thomas wrote, the will is directed by the intellect. The early apostolic fathers, it may be conceded, followed St. Paul in discounting the value of general thought, that is of philosophy, which was never characteristic among the ancient Jews. With the Hellenic conversions a new attitude developed, the neo-Platonic schools, particularly that of Alexandria, realized that to satisfy the full nature of man, who after all is a reasoning animal, though his reasons may often be erroneous, it was necessary to recon-

cile the Christian creed with metaphysic. This task was attempted by St. Clement of Alexandria and his successors who identified the Platonic Logos with Christ or, later, with the Holy Spirit, and, avoiding gnostic heresies of emanation, saw in the Incarnation and Creation that passage from the one to the many which was the outcome of Greek philosophic thought. From the Alexandrian school came Athanasius, whose trinitarianism had a philosophic foundation and St. Augustine, greatest of Christian neo-Platonists.

The Platonists held to the doctrine of Universals, the conception of ultimate values, which have an independent reality apart from time or space, and this view, undoubtedly, was easier of assimilation to the Christian idea of the Godhead than the later Aristotelian denial of them save as mental conceptions, a view expressed first in logic by the Nominalists and, later, by philosophers such as William of Ockham at the end of the medieval epoch. But even St. Thomas, who remains the chosen Doctor of the Roman Church, was sufficiently influenced by the new Aristotelian approach to deny that either the cardinal doctrine of Creation, or the Trinity could be defended on rational grounds, here differing from the earlier thinkers. Thus he, the intellectual defender of orthodoxy, drove a wedge into the unity of faith and reason, a divergence which steadily developed, until finally, the pious, particularly the Protestant, abandoned any attempt to reconcile the two. Faith became a matter of grace which needed no intellectual support while, on the other hand, the secular philosophers gradually abandoned faith altogether in the interests of reason, but by this time the medieval period was over and Descartes and Kant reigned supreme.

In our time we have witnessed the overthrow of the reason in its turn, not in the interests of religion, but in that of instinct or emotion. The view of Duns Scotus that Will dominates Mind is more acceptable to the moderns than the Thomistic insistence on the supremacy of Reason. However this may be, here is another obstacle to the re-integration of Europe, an intellectual one, for modern empiricists, whether called pragmatists or existentialists, relativists or behaviourists, not to speak of the founders of the new logic (which would curtail altogether the powers of reason to the relative and make of God a meaningless expression) are to be found outside Europe, in the United States as well as in Vienna or Paris.

A reading of the Giffard Lectures, devoted to the relation of Man, the Universe and Deity, discloses, to those who analyse them a complete absence of any prevailing belief; they are eminently personal and idiosyncratic, and the number who speak with such orthodoxy as would have satisfied the most liberal of the medieval Schoolmen is very limited. Despite the persuasions of Gilson, Maritain and the neo-Thomists the school of modern European thinkers who base themselves upon the methods or creeds of the medievalists is very small, and, it would appear, likely to remain so.

Yet another cleavage between modernism and the middle ages lies in the



application of toleration, for man has never been very receptive of ideas which he conceived to be evil or inconvenient. To the medievalist the supreme crime was infidelity—once that is grasped his attitude towards heresy becomes more intelligible and the Inquisition, though not to be defended, at least a consistent institution. On a less penal plane, the constant examinations of ecclesiastics and others suspected of false doctrine cannot escape the notice of the student of the times. Treason was a local, a municipal, crime, immeasurably less serious than the danger to man's salvation involved in the teaching of wrong ideas. Sinful behaviour is the lot of every man, but the denial or perversion of faith was inexcusable. To-day we have reversed the order of demerit; to betray the nation or subvert the constitution, or to attempt to do so, is a wrong almost unpardonable; the secularist and the atheist may conduct their propaganda with impunity, and blasphemy as a crime is almost as obsolete as witchcraft.

We are not concerned here to commend or condemn this shift of emphasis; it arises from the general mental climate of the two ages, but it illustrates their incompatibility and the difficulties which lie in front of those who think that a restored Europe will be likely to establish once more those ancient ways of life derived from Greece, from Jerusalem, and from Rome which made united Europe what it was. To-day the young are untaught in Latin, the universal language of the medieval scholar, nor versed in Greek which it was the glory of the Renaissance to recover. A secular gradation of power is referred to as 'hierarchy', persons of an exact mind are called 'meticulous'—the classic meaning of words is fast being lost and the culture of the old grammar school of the "Liberal arts", the trivium and quadrivium, is at an end; modern education is scarcely calculated to restore medieval or classical values.

Is then Europe anything more today than hypostatized geography? It is a question not easy to decide; economically a case has been made, apparently, for co-ordination, but how far that involves the institution of a novel culture or the recovery of an old one is a problem which only the very wise or the very rash will be inclined to determine.

This much, however, may be observed, that the apparent unifying influences which at present obtain, namely those of general scientific knowledge and application, facility of communication and administrative capacity are just those in which the middle ages (though not classical Rome) were most deficient. On the other hand, as has been so often declared, medieval men possessed a common spiritual and idealistic principle which to-day is very lacking; in modern phrase they had, what we have not, a uniform and coherent ideology. The fissure between modern conceptions of democracy held in West and East is far deeper than the much emphasized conflict between Church and State, in Pope and Emperor; besides modern incompatibilities the conflicts of papacy and the councils appear to be mere difference of administrative power. The future will decide whether the material necessity of union or the possession of a common morality and metaphysic is the more compulsive and enduring.

## GERMAN REPARATIONS

BY TIBOR MENDE

THE question of reparations from Germany has been one of the principal conditioning factors in inter-Allied relations since the end of the 1939-1945 war. The urgent need to repair quickly the devastated economy of the Soviet Union and to save its people another long period of hardship and economic up-hill work, has determined the Soviet rulers' attitude on the question of reparations ever since the Potsdam meeting of the Big Four. Once the hopes for a direct American loan to the Soviet Union were frustrated, Soviet demands for large scale reparations from Germany became more and more insistent. The conviction that the Soviet Union had borne the brunt of the battle against the common enemy and the consequent moral claim on Allied assistance to alleviate the efforts of the devastation suffered, have given added emphasis to Soviet claims and have given to these demands a psychological colouring in inter-Allied negotiations. The principal testing ground of the Soviet claims has been the debate over reparations from current German production.

The signatories of the Potsdam Declaration recognized that speed was an important factor in carrying out the German reparations programme by agreeing that the Occupying Powers should determine within six months from August 1, 1945, the amount of industrial capital equipment to be removed from Germany in reparations, and by allowing two years thereafter for the physical removal of that equipment. Special provision was also made for advance deliveries to begin immediately. The Paris agreement of November 1945 which created the Inter-Allied Reparation Agency (I.A.R.A.) also emphasized the early completion of the reparation task. Though with various delays, I.A.R.A. was notified of allocations of removable equipment and has been carrying out its functions ever since its first Assembly meeting in Brussels in February 1946. The last list of reparations allocations, just submitted to the Agency, and completing reparations in equipment and machinery removed from Germany, will mark the end of reparations of this kind as soon as the earmarked machinery is distributed among the nations entitled to reparations from Germany.

The estimated value of the 682 plants, the final total of removals from the British and American zones, is about \$200,000,000 but it is conceded that their real value to-day may be around four times this figure, or just under one billion dollars. In addition, however, the Allies have already received as



reparations German shipping to the value of \$145,000,000. Some external German assets still await distribution. Their total value is estimated at nearly one billion dollars but, largely owing to the reluctance of the Swedish and Swiss Governments to release them, no one expects that more than a fraction of that amount will be available for distribution in the foreseeable future.

All this together amounts to one and a quarter billion dollars at best, an insignificant figure compared to the damage suffered by Germany's former victims. Even if one considers heavy capital removals from the Soviet zone of occupation and the steady drain of current production by the Occupying Power, with the additional over a billion dollars reparations, these add up to a very small figure compared to the \$20,000,000,000 accepted by President Roosevelt as a basis for discussion on the amount of German reparations, at the Yalta Conference.

This, however, completes the story of only one type of reparations from Germany and leaves the question of reparations, from current production or in the form of German labour, unaffected. With the total amount of reparations removals from the western zones finally determined, it is certain that the reparations thus allowed are inadequate to compensate for even a reasonable part of the damage that Germany inflicted on the majority of the countries entitled to reparations. As a result, their continued demand for reparations will carry great weight with their respective public opinions and will also command considerable sympathy among world public opinion as a whole.

The history of this problem goes right back to the time of the Crimea Conference. Part V of the Crimea Protocol, entitled "Reparations", detailed three types of reparations to be exacted from Germany: removals, "annual deliveries of goods from current production for a period to be fixed," and the use of German labour. In the Potsdam Declaration it was stated that the payment of reparations by Germany "should leave enough resources to enable the German people to subsist without external assistance. In working out the economic balance of Germany, the necessary means must be provided to pay for imports approved by the Control Council in Germany. The proceeds of exports from current production and stocks shall be available in the first place for payment for such imports."

Four weeks after the Potsdam Conference, on August 30, 1945, upon his return to the United States, Edwin W. Pauley, the personal representative of President Truman and head of the U.S. delegation to the Allied Commission on Reparations which met in Moscow between Yalta and Potsdam, declared in a public statement that "with respect to the amount of and time limit on, annual recurring reparations—reparations extracted in the form of current production from year to year—no decision can be made until the character and amount of removals of industrial capital equipment have been determined by the Allied Control Council and the future economy of Germany is more clearly defined." This statement, of course, does not indicate that the head of the United States'

delegation to the Allied Commission on Reparations believed that Potsdam had ruled out current production as a source of reparations.

But at the Moscow Conference of March 1947 both the American and British delegations maintained that Potsdam had annulled the provisions of the Yalta agreement on reparations from current production and they refused even to study the question. The French stood for a compromise and M. Molotov, to counter the British and American attitude, introduced a hitherto unpublished protocol to the Yalta agreement signed by President Roosevelt, Mr. Churchill and Mr. Stalin, dealing with the problem of reparations. The protocol, at the time, still marked 'top secret' in American archives, was published in the Moscow papers of March 19, 1947. Its Section B, apart from removals and the use of German labour, clearly provides for German reparations from "annual deliveries of goods from current production after the end of the war for a period to be determined." The Soviet and American delegations agreed, according to the same protocol, that the Moscow Reparations Commission in its study of the question "will adopt as a basis for discussion the proposal of the Soviet government that the grand total of reparations" of removals and from current production "is to be \$20,000,000,000 of which fifty per cent. of this sum goes to the Soviet Union." The British delegation maintained that until the examination of the reparations question by the Moscow Reparations Commission, no reparations figures should be named. This, then, is the only concrete indication of the amount of reparations from Germany the Soviet authorities expected.

Since this original agreement the actual situation has completely changed. The zonal divisions in Germany have been perpetuated for a number of reasons, the refusal to allow reparations from current German production being, probably, one of the principal among them. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union has proceeded to compensate itself both with removals and deliveries from current production from its own zone of occupation. No one, of course, is in a position to estimate the value of equipment and goods thus obtained. There can hardly be any doubt, however, that even with the addition of the Soviet share of reparations from removals from the western zones, the Soviet Union could hardly have obtained anything like \$10,000,000,000 worth of reparations from Germany, the amount claimed at the Yalta conference.

In all probability the desire of the Soviet rulers to accelerate their country's economic recovery still figures among the principal considerations moulding Soviet external policies. Therefore, it is reasonable to suppose that a renewed Russian demand for reparations from current German production would be one of the principal conditions posed in case of a last-minute consideration of German unity at the next meeting of the four Foreign Ministers. In fact, Russian pre-occupation with economic reconstruction would justify the conclusion that the acceptance or refusal of such Russian claims might decisively prejudice the chances of an eventual last-minute unification of Germany.



It is possible to maintain that the Potsdam Declaration can hardly be regarded any longer as a common denominator for any new departure on the question of a united Germany and that the partitioning of Germany ought to be regarded as a lasting arrangement. Even if one accepts this reasoning, the question of reparations from current production is likely to remain a live issue. Should Germany's partitioning be lasting, the reparations claims of the U.S.S.R. and Poland may be disregarded but the eighteen member nations of the Inter-Allied Reparation Agency may still raise their claim for such reparations.

In fact, at the November 1945 Paris Conference on Reparations twelve of the eighteen members of I.A.R.A.—Albania, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Egypt, France, Greece, India, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Norway and Yugoslavia—recorded their conviction that their justified demands for reparations will not be met without recourse to current German production and services. There is, of course, no reason to suppose that these twelve countries have had any reason to change their attitude since that conviction was recorded.

The basic question is, naturally, whether Germany is or will be able to pay reparations from current production. Accustomed to the flow of bleak news from occupied Germany, one is inclined to dismiss the question as absurd. Closer examination of the problem, however, may reveal different facts.

The Potsdam Declaration provided that a living standard should be maintained in Germany "not exceeding the average of standard of living of European countries" excluding the United Kingdom and the U.S.S.R. Standard of living is a peculiarly vague term and it would be difficult to calculate exactly what living standard for Germany this clause really prescribes. Taking Colin Clark's figures for average real income per head, of occupied population, in different countries, expressed in international units for the period between 1925 to 1934, German average real income during this period was more than 30 per cent. above the Continental average. In other words, a reduction of some 23 per cent. would have been necessary during the period under review to bring the German level down to the Continental average. For comparison, we may use what is reported to have been the western Allies' argument on this subject at Inter-Allied negotiations during 1945 and 1946. It was assumed that over fifteen years before 1939 the average income of Continental Europe was about thirty per cent. below that of Germany's and in 1932, for instance, her average income was some thirty per cent. below that in 1938. Thus, it was argued, the 1932 German consumption levels can be regarded as a broad guide to the average level that has to be achieved in post-war Germany. This, therefore, accepts a standard of living thirty per cent. lower than in 1938.

As is well known, on the basis of the new level of industry announcement, altogether enough industrial potential is left in western Germany to achieve by 1951 the industrial level of 1936. According to an official announcement, moreover, Germans in the combined zones might reach eighty per cent. of their pre-war standard of living by 1951. If the Potsdam Declaration's pro-

vision regarding Germany's future standard of living is still valid, and there is no moral reason why it should not be, a reduction of Germany's pre-war living standard by about thirty per cent. by 1951 would be necessary. This is ten per cent. lower than what is now officially promised to the Germans.

It cannot be forgotten, moreover, that between 1933-1939 Germany's expenditure on armaments totalled about R.M. 90 billion or about twenty per cent. of the average yearly national income. In other words with armaments production non-existent an industrial level some twenty per cent. lower than in 1936 ought to result in the same standard of living as in that year. Thus, to bring post-war Germany's standard of living in line with the continental average, her productive capacity ought not to be equal to that in 1936 but at least twenty per cent. lower. Even if one considers the population increase in the western zones this would still mean a reduction, leaving not eighty but about seventy-five per cent. of pre-war living standards as consistent with the Potsdam Declaration's provisions. This, of course, accepts that the standard of living of the European countries will be restored to pre-war levels by 1951, by no means a certainty. If by 1951 therefore, western Germany is to surpass the average Continental level of living standards, it will depend merely on the rate of her industrial and agricultural recovery as to when, between now and 1951, she will reach the actual point beyond which she could pay reparations from current production without lowering her living standard below that prescribed in the Potsdam Declaration.

Many of the countries entitled to German reparations would thus obtain goods which were sold to them in the past exclusively by Germany and would not constitute any competition to their home industries. Moreover, the bulk of Germany's exports are expected to be sufficient to pay for her essential imports some time before 1951. When in five to ten years' time the present sellers' markets will be replaced by buyers' markets, it is unlikely that Germany will be able to sell all the goods she would like to in the world markets. The stream of reparations goods may then conceal an unsaleable surplus and may not even constitute a real deficit from export capacity. Its significance in maintaining full employment for a period of years, in at least some of Germany's important industrial branches, on the other hand, is self-evident.

It is important to point out that reparations deliveries from current German production would be consistent with any global assistance scheme for this continent. If the countries entitled to reparations from Germany could obtain urgently needed machinery and other goods from Germany, such deliveries would speed up their individual economic recovery and, indirectly, the revival of European prosperity.

German deliveries, over a period of years, would certainly diminish the amount of financial assistance the countries in question would require of the United States. A certain gain in efficiency and corresponding economies would also result from the fact that German reparations deliveries could be planned



so that Germany might supply materials and goods suited to specific local requirements instead of standard qualities produced for the ordinary market. It is likely that the sum total of advantages accruing to the various recipient countries from German deliveries, expressed in their accelerated rate of economic recovery, may far exceed the possible disadvantages of an eventual delay in balancing Germany's external trade accounts. By making Germany the workshop of the countries she formerly exploited, the amount of direct U.S. dollar aid required by these same countries would proportionately decrease.

With the announcement of the new level of industry plan for western Germany and the publication of the final list of plants earmarked for removal, the decision has become apparent to leave Germany in possession of sufficient industrial potential to allow her to continue to dominate Europe's economy. The threat to the nations of the European continent implied in these decisions makes the integration of German productive capacity into a peaceful European economy more imperative and more urgent than ever before. The planning involved in the delivery and reception of German reparations from current production would be a first step towards such integration.

To determine the date from when Germany would be able to pay reparations from current production is a matter of statistics. But to make it sure that she does pay such reparations is a matter of justice. Opposition to such deliveries, whether it is on the part of German political leaders or Allied officials, can mean only two things. The first is that the one-and-a-quarter billion dollars' worth of reparations already delivered or to be delivered by Germany, in addition to what the Russians have already taken out of their zone, is sufficient to compensate Germany's former adversaries for all the destruction and misery she inflicted on them. The second is that Germany is entitled to be left in a dominating economic position in the centre of the European continent. The first is obviously unconvincing and the second is understandably repellent to the countries who will have to continue to live on the same continent with the Germans.

## EMPIRE MIGRATION

BY SIR J. HOPE SIMPSON

GREAT BRITAIN cannot live save by the import of very large amounts of food. In the wars of 1914-1918 and 1939-1945 enemy action seriously interfered with the flow of imports. In the former of these two wars the nation was at one time in acute danger of starvation. In the possible event of another war, it is argued, the interruption of supplies to Great Britain is likely to be even more acute, owing to the technical improvement in the submarine, in its speed, in the power of its armament and in its capacity for prolonged submersion. This danger of starvation, it is said, can only be completely overcome by production, within Great Britain, of sufficient food to maintain its population. This is not possible if the population to be fed remains in the neighbourhood of fifty millions.

The same argument, however, applies to the import of arms, ammunition, military equipment of all kinds, petrol and oil, and raw materials of manufacture, all of which are essential to the conduct of war by Great Britain. As a means of survival in war, it is certainly not enough that the country should be able to feed its population on home-produced food. The necessity for imports of other kinds on a prodigious scale would continue, and the suggested reduction of the population by ten or fifteen millions might well so weaken the country as to render victory much less certain.

To-day the Dominions, especially Australia and Canada, are in need of largely increased population, both for their material development and for safety in time of war. In the last war, Australia escaped invasion only by the intervention of the United States of America. Her population of seven and a half millions is in no sense adequate to defend her territory, were she to be attacked.

A further reason for a rapid increase in Australia's population lies in the pressure of population in many far eastern countries, notably in India, in parts of the Dutch East Indies, in China and in Japan. In India alone the annual increase of population amounts to five millions. There is obvious political danger in the existence of wide empty spaces in a White Australia, which could provide *lebensraum* for some of the surplus population of those countries, but to which access is refused. It is easy to understand and to accept the principle of a White Australia, but it is not equally easy to defend that doctrine, unless effective steps are taken to fill the empty spaces with a white population.



Australia now seriously plans to increase her population as rapidly as she can with the help of immigration from Europe, and particularly from Great Britain. The Minister for Immigration has stated that it is the intention of the Australian Government to raise the population of the country to twenty millions in the course of the next two generations, that 400,000 people now in Great Britain wish to migrate to Australia at once, of whom Australia would like to take at least 50,000 a year as an immediate measure, but that the ultimate target is a minimum of 70,000 a year. If, however, the plan for an Australia of twenty million inhabitants in sixty years is to be carried through, the annual addition should be some 210,000. Allowing for natural increase at rates prevailing during recent years, the plan would demand an average of 150,000 immigrants each year.

Canada also hopes for a material increase in her population, which is to-day about twelve and a half millions. She has a Commissioner for European emigration in charge of an office in London. The rate of natural increase in the population of Canada is large. In 1944 the birth-rate exceeded the death-rate by 14.1 per thousand, and the estimated population in 1945 exceeded that of 1941 by 53.2 per thousand. It is, however, believed that the country could easily support a population of fifty millions. The natural resources and the agricultural possibilities of Canada are very great and their exploitation to the full might have an immense effect on world prosperity. The production of a fully populated and fully developed Canada might indeed rival in importance that of the United States.

Canada does not want unplanned migration. At the Third Unofficial Conference on British Commonwealth Relations, held in London in 1945, one of the Canadian delegates stressed this point. "Canada has often taken migrants 'in large gulps' . . . and has found them difficult to digest."\*

Willingness to accept migrants from Great Britain has also been expressed by the Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa. Many are already on the move to that country. More wish to go when transport conditions permit. This is a new feature in migration. "While it would seem desirable from the point of view of the white population of South Africa that it should be strengthened numerically, the country has had little attraction for immigrants."†

Political conditions in the Dominion are much complicated by racial problems. Of a total population of about ten millions, one-fifth only is of European descent. Of these over fifty per cent are of Dutch, over thirty per cent. of British origin. Between the whites and the natives of the country, of whom there are some seven millions, there is a class of 'coloured' inhabitants of mixed white and dark blood, which numbers three-quarters of a million and is said to be increasing rapidly. Again there are 200,000 East Indians, of whom eighty per cent. were born in South Africa. The large majority are in

\* *The British Commonwealth and World Society*, p. 117. Oxford University Press, 1947.

† *The British Empire*, 2nd edn., p. 73. Royal Institute of International Affairs: Oxford University Press, 1938.

Natal. Against strenuous opposition, these Indians demand social, economic and political advantages at present only enjoyed by the white population. There is further the political struggle between the Dutch and the British elements in the white population.

In addition to political malaise, social and economic difficulties abound for the immigrant into South Africa at the present time. Housing is as scarce as it is at home and rents for dwellings on lease and prices for those for sale are inflated. The annual average income per head in South Africa is some twenty-seven per cent. higher than that in Great Britain, but the cost of living is high. South Africa does not seem to offer an outlet for any large number of would-be emigrants from Great Britain, though there are doubtless profitable openings in that Dominion for a limited number of skilled men and women in various occupations. There is no question here of filling up empty spaces by the admission of families or groups.

New Zealand, in area larger than Great Britain and Northern Ireland, has to-day a population less than two millions. Emigration to that country has not been large in the past, and it is remarkable that, in the years 1934 to 1937 inclusive, the number of those leaving the Dominion exceeded the number of immigrants by 2,400. The argument for an increase of population in Australia applies, though with less urgency, to New Zealand, which is more remote from the congested Pacific areas and has a climate less well suited to oriental peoples. At the moment opportunities for priority admission to New Zealand are restricted to persons qualified for certain classes of employment, with age limits of twenty and thirty-five. Some four thousand people have applied, of whom 370 have so far been transported. These are all single, and in its Information Paper for prospective settlers the New Zealand government writes: "In view of the acute housing shortage in New Zealand and the lack of shipping, it will not be possible to include married couples or family groups in the immigration scheme for at least two years." This sentence is underlined.

At home the urge to migration, which was wide-spread after the war of 1914-1918, is to-day, as a result of the World War, even more obvious and more wide-spread. Mr. Calwell's statement, that 400,000 have registered in London as wishing to emigrate to Australia, was amplified by Mr. Winston Churchill in his broadcast of August 16 last. He said: "I read and am told that, after two years of Socialist rule, more than half a million of our people have applied to emigrate from this island to Canada, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and several hundred thousand more want to go to the United States of America or South America. These must be among our most lively and active citizens in the prime of life, who wish to go to some place where they can make the best of themselves and their children."

There are ample reasons for this ferment. Many have been unsettled by life in the various branches of the armed forces during the war with its attend-



ant adventure and experiences. Many, again, who were engaged in modest and monotonous work before the war, rose to positions of responsibility and ended as senior officers. These, naturally, are now reluctant to return to their pre-war positions. Yet they cannot find openings in this country which they think to be fitted to the ability which war conditions have shown them to possess. The acute shortage of housing and the restriction in the standard of life, which began under the stress of war and have become even more acute since the war ended, cause much discontent. In addition there is progressive interference with personal freedom due to governmental controls, which are necessary and inevitable in the circumstances of to-day, but which are none the less irksome. From these emigration seems to offer an avenue of escape. In certain classes of the population greatly increased taxation and increasing insecurity of capital have created or stimulated the wish to emigrate to some country where, it is thought, the attack on wealth would be less severe and taxation less oppressive. It is noticeable that in its Memorandum attached to the Immigration Questionnaire, the South African Government gives examples of taxation. Among other examples, these show that a single man with an income of £5,000 a year would pay slightly over £1,500 in income tax, a married man without children with income of £600 would pay slightly less than £29. Reports from residents in the Dominions often suggest that conditions of life there are easier and more comfortable than at home, and these tend to stimulate discontent, unrest and the desire to emigrate.

There are thus reasons to-day which will result in the migration of perhaps from half a million to a million inhabitants of Great Britain to the Dominions or elsewhere, as opportunities for travel become available. Seemingly the classes from which these migrants will be drawn will in the main be of the well-to-do who hope to export their capital and live on their income elsewhere, and of those, aged under forty, whom Mr. Churchill described as "our most active and lively citizens in the prime of life." The movement has been caused by temporary conditions and there is at present no evidence that it will persist, or that it will gain momentum so as materially to affect the size of the populations in Great Britain and the Dominions.

In the United Kingdom to-day, the under forty group numbers some twenty-nine millions—over 58½ per cent. of the estimated population at the end of 1946: Were this group to be reduced by ten millions, the percentage of those remaining would be slightly over 48½ of the reduced population. Even more serious would be the increase in the percentage of the over sixty group. This was 15.3 per cent of the estimated population at the end of 1946. The migration of ten millions of the under forty group would raise the figure to nearly nineteen per cent. It is, of course, obvious that the migration of anything like ten millions could only be carried out over a term of not less than twenty, or, more probably, not less than thirty years. But the ultimate effect, if migration were confined to those under forty, would be largely to increase

the proportion of that class of the population which is an inevitable burden on the national economy and, by reducing the number of those on whom that burden falls, to increase its weight. Clearly, if an emigration policy on a large scale is approved, steps must be taken to ensure that the emigrants are not confined to the younger generation, but include a fair share of those over forty.

A further matter which must gravely affect the decision on a policy of extensive migration is the debt of this country, both, at home and abroad. The nominal value of the National Debt at March 31, 1946, was £13,450 million. This is about £272 per head of the population. A decrease of ten millions in the population would raise the per capita sum to over £340 on those who remained. The difficulties in connection with the foreign debt, especially the dollar debt, would become even more acute. To-day a colossal increase in exports is demanded, combined with severely restricted home consumption. The labour force is already not large enough to produce all that is needed. No material reduction in that force could be allowed, unless accompanied by some arrangement under which a proportionate amount of the foreign debt was accepted by the Dominion to which the migrants were transferred.

In so far as the export drive is planned to meet current costs of food, a reduction of the consuming public by ten millions would result in a corresponding fall in those costs, and, if agricultural labour were not affected by migration, imports of food would fall even more than proportionately. That would imply that the whole of the migrants would belong to the other and mainly the industrial classes of the community. This again would mean that raw materials for manufacture would not be needed on the same scale as they are needed to-day, which would in its turn reduce the current costs of imports. It would, however, also mean a large reduction in the production of goods both for home consumption and for export. Before a policy of mass migration were adopted, this aspect of the resultant economic effect would require careful, expert examination.

In Great Britain the plans of the late Coalition and of the present Labour government, plans made on the basis of existing and prospective population, have provided for very wide development in the social, educational and economic conditions of the country. These have inevitably meant a very large increase in the national yearly expenditure. Health and education alone are calling for an increased annual expenditure of hundreds of millions. Plans have also been laid for the development of electrical power to meet the needs, domestic and industrial, of the population of Great Britain as it is to-day and, in the absence of mass migration, may be expected to be tomorrow. Were a policy adopted which aimed at the reduction of the population to thirty or thirty-five millions plans already made must be revised,—extensions contemplated and in part begun, must be curtailed. Mass migration would have inevitable and important repercussions on domestic policy.



In an article in a recent issue of a popular journal Mr. Calwell wrote: "Great Britain would be better off and the Empire would be in a far better position, if some ten to fifteen millions of people could be transferred from Britain to the Greater Britain overseas. A long-range policy should aim at bringing about this transfer . . . Since Britain is over populated, it is greatly to the advantage both of those who go and of those who stay, that there should be a movement of millions of people from Britain to the Dominions. A man who leaves Britain for Australia helps himself, he helps Australia and he helps the British Commonwealth. But above all he helps Britain. . . ."\*

The important questions seem to be whether Great Britain is, in fact, over-populated, whether it is desirable, in the interests of Great Britain herself, the Dominions and the world in general, that a material portion of the population, say one-third, should find homes and livelihood in the Dominions, and, if so, what measures should be taken to ensure that result. The long view and a definite policy are demanded, but it is clear that it would be to the serious disadvantage of the Mother Country that she should lose millions of the under forty age-groups and be left with a largely increased proportion of the population above that age. Nor can she afford to lose large numbers of the well-to-do.

That Australia is under-populated may well be accepted as a true statement of fact, but Mr. Calwell does not support his allegation that Britain is over-populated by any evidence. During the slump of the 1930's there were two million unemployed in this country, a fact which might be adduced as an argument that the country contained more people than it was able to support. That argument, however, at that period, might be used to support the view that the United States was grossly over-populated, as the number of unemployed in that country was certainly six times as great as those unemployed in Great Britain. Yet it has never been suggested that the United States are unable to support the existing population. The standard of life in the United States, in normal times, is higher than that in any other country in the world. In normal times, the standard of life in Great Britain is more than adequate and is higher than that of most of the highly developed countries of Europe. It cannot be denied that to-day the standard of life in this country is threatened, but the threat is due to the special conditions produced by the war and is unlikely to be permanent. The report of the Third Unofficial Conference on British Commonwealth Relations, to which reference has been made above, contains the following words: "It seems to be fairly certain that Great Britain will only be able to supply a small number of emigrants, so small that they will not have any appreciable effect in helping to solve the population difficulties of the Dominions . . ."<sup>†</sup> At that Conference there was no suggestion, either on the part of the British or of any other delegation, that Britain is

\* *Picture Post*, September 20, 1947. p. 24.

<sup>†</sup> *op. cit.* p. 29.

over-populated. That the country is thickly populated is obvious, and, with the rise in the birthrate which is now in progress, it is possible that the population may become excessive, but it does not seem that over-population in Britain to-day can be used as an argument in favour of drastic reduction by migration.

The matter is of such grave importance to Great Britain, to the Dominions and, indeed, to the world in general, that it deserves serious study on the part of the British Government, in consultation with the Dominion Governments concerned. Were the decision to approve of the policy so forcefully urged by Mr. Calwell, the next step would be to constitute a planning board, on which both the Mother Country and the Dominions were represented, to work out the details of a scheme for organized migration over a period of years,—a scheme which would necessarily include organs of propaganda and the provision of preliminary training for would-be emigrants. If immigration into Australia, Canada and New Zealand is to be a matter of millions, these can only be absorbed, in large part, by settlement on the land. The failure of experiments after the war of 1914-1918, in the course of which many ex-service men were settled in Kenya and in Australia, points to the essential necessity of such preliminary training. The belief that any man can farm if he be given the land, the tools, the seed and the live-stock with which to make a start is commonly held but gravely mistaken. Much could be learnt from the methods of the Jewish Agency, which has been so conspicuously successful in training its pioneers for settlement in Palestine.

Great Britain has now to submit to direction of labour. Were a policy to be adopted, aiming at a reduction of the population to thirty or thirty-five millions, direction on a much more acute scale would be needed. The Government would have to take power, both to direct would-be stay-at-homes to emigrate to a given Dominion, and to direct would-be emigrants to remain in Great Britain, if their migration were contrary to the public interest. The British people are rapidly becoming used to direction, but it is not conceivable that direction on the scale necessary for a drastic reduction of the population would be accepted.



## SCIENCE AND THE STATE

BY W. T. WELLS, M.P.

SINCE the end of the war there has been ample recognition that, in order to prosper and even, indeed, to survive, our country must encourage and promote the development of the sciences. The war taught the lesson in unmistakable fashion; the creation of new weapons, the need to counter those of the enemy, and finally the revolution wrought by the explosion of the first atomic bomb, brought it home in general terms to the least inquiring mind. Other, more specific lessons enforced themselves on circles of people far wider than the professional scientists: for example, that while in pure science Great Britain led the world, in its application to practical problems others, including the Americans, surpassed ourselves. The relevance of science as a whole, and of this last deficiency in particular, to our economic plight of to-day equally requires no argument. In the short term, the maintenance of our present standards of life depends mainly upon the best being made of the industrial equipment now available and, within the limitations imposed by existing equipment, upon improved methods of production. In the long term, both the raising of our standards of life and the preservation of Great Britain's position as a world power depend upon better machinery and equipment, new methods of production, a new and better utilization of materials, and in general upon new techniques both in peace and in war.

When such is the importance of science to our life and livelihood, a layman need not apologize for raising the questions whether the present arrangements for promoting scientific research and furthering its application to industry and defence are satisfactory, and how they should be improved. So far as the answers to these questions can be found within the fields of Government activity and Government expenditure, the Select Committee on Estimates, of which the writer is a member, set itself the task of finding them in the Session of Parliament that has just come to an end; and much of the material discussed in this article can be found in the Third Report of that Committee and in the Appendices thereto.

The general picture presented by this Report is one of great activity, but somewhat unbalanced activity. In paragraph 79 the Committee formulated four criteria by which the Government's research should be judged: "whether the sum granted for fundamental research, whether free or directed, bears a reasonable relationship to that allocated to the conduct of applied research and development; whether the sum spent on directed fundamental and applied

research is distributed in the best proportions between the several main lines of civil and military research; whether sufficient is being done to enable the universities to improve the quantity and quality of their human output; and whether the inducements offered are such as will attract a fair share of this output into the Government's scientific service."

In applying these criteria, and in order to decide how far the lack of balance that the picture of Government activity presents is blameworthy or not, it is essential to remember that the research and development financed and promoted by the State are but a part of the whole. In the words of the Report itself\*: "... though there are important exceptions, what is often referred to as 'pure' or 'fundamental' research (that is, research directed to the advancement of knowledge irrespective of how that knowledge may ultimately be applied to the practical needs of man) is carried out in universities and independent scientific institutions, either with or without financial aid from the Exchequer. Research directly undertaken by the Government is in the main confined to the attacking of problems which have a more or less direct bearing on the field of Government responsibility and to the application to those problems of the knowledge gained by pure research."

Further, in the field of applied science at least, industry in general, and particularly in the bigger concerns, clearly makes a great contribution already, and probably has a still greater contribution to make in the future, to the advancement of scientific knowledge and its application: though here the natural if regrettable tendency of privately-owned industry to keep its secrets to itself and even, sometimes, not to make use of them at all, because of the anticipation, right or wrong, that their owners will make more profit from standing in the old-established ways than by exploring and exploiting new fields that the scientists have opened for them, must not be forgotten.

These factors must make it very difficult for the scientist, and obviously make it impossible for the layman, to assess whether the present apportionment between fundamental and applied research is correct or not. But the formation of the Advisory Council on Scientific Policy, under the chairmanship of Sir Henry Tizard, should ensure that the correct balance is found and kept. The Council's terms of reference are: "To advise the Lord President of the Council in the exercise of his responsibility for the formulation and execution of Government scientific policy," and the memorandum published as Appendix 1 to the Select Committee's Report states that "its establishment is designed to meet the need for some central body which can give advice on general principles and which can ensure that the resources of science are used to the greatest possible extent in the solution of the country's economic problems." In one form or another the Government finance scientific work in the universities and other institutions for teaching and research to the tune of over £7,000,000. These

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\* Third Report from the Select Committee on Estimates. Session 1946-1947. *Expenditure on Research and Development*. H.M. Stationery Office. 1s. 6d.

institutions are ridden with such an extremely loose rein in the way they spend public money that they can scarcely be said to be subject to any control whatever, and it is an understatement to say that the last charge that could be preferred against them is that of subordinating pure to applied science. Pure science and fundamental research are the foundations of all scientific advance, but applied science too has its claims and is equal in importance, particularly at a time of economic crisis such as the present. There is more than a tendency in academic circles in Great Britain to regard applied science as a mere ancillary to pure science, and it is quite clear that this trend is contrary to the public interest.

Where grants of public money are made to educational institutions it is probable that pure science receives more than its fair share. Looking at Government scientific expenditure as a whole, on the other hand, the greater part is undoubtedly devoted to applied science and it may well be that in future a larger sum should be allotted to fundamental research. If so, the composition and character of the Advisory Council are well calculated to ensure that the necessary claims should be put forward.

The figures of estimated expenditure on Governmental research and expenditure for 1947-1948, as stated in paragraph 3 of the Select Committee's report, reveal at first sight the lack of balance suggested above. The total amounts to over £69 million. Of this figure over £60 million are divided between the Admiralty and the Ministry of Supply, which is responsible for the armament and equipment of the Army and the Royal Air Force. At a time when our most urgent preoccupation is with economic rehabilitation this apparent disparity between military and civilian expenditure calls for the most serious and searching inquiry. It is true that the real disparity is less than the figures stated suggest. The Ministry of Supply holds responsibilities for civil aviation and for the engineering industry. Far more important in this connection, it is also responsible for research into, and development of, atomic energy, of whose potentialities for peace, at least, we are now only on the threshold. From evidence submitted to the Committee it appears that defence requirements account for about sixty-five per cent. of the whole scientific expenditure in all departments.

The question whether such a high proportion is necessary involves technicalities on which the layman cannot reach a conclusion, but broadly two considerations are in issue. First, it must never be forgotten that, in the words of Adam Smith, defence is better than opulence, and no responsible person would challenge this opinion. But the alternatives confronting the country to-day are not opulence or a modest sufficiency: they are an economy that will permit our survival as an independent force in world affairs, on the one hand, or an economy that does not so suffice, on the other, and even our military power can only rest on the foundation of a stable and well-balanced economy. It would therefore be a poor service to the cause of national defence to starve either fundamental research, or the study of the application of its results to



industry, for the sake of pursuing the immediate objects of the Service Departments.

The difficulty of resolving the conflicting claims of military and civilian expenditure is not, of course, confined to the field of science. It is, indeed, a familiar call, made after every war we have fought in recent times, that we have only scraped through by a narrow margin and accordingly that for the future a higher proportion of our expenditure must be on defence.\* The easy solution, as Gibbon would have called it, of our constant victories by narrow margins is that the Channel has always saved us. It would be an interesting subject of study to investigate what connection, if any, exists between our unpreparedness for war and the economic, technical, and psychological reserves with which we win it. This is not the place to pursue that theme; but while of all forms of preparation for war scientific expenditure is the easiest to justify, the high proportion that scientific expenditure on defence bears to such expenditure on medical research, agricultural research, and all the other manifold purposes of peace must occasion particular disquiet in this age of economic planning.

The third criterion put forward by the Select Committee on Estimates is whether sufficient is being done to enable the universities to improve the quality and quantity of their human output. This question really divides itself into two parts: whether the universities are being helped to recruit the right students in sufficient numbers, and whether they are being helped sufficiently to educate their students when they have got them. The low proportion of university graduates to the general population in Great Britain compared both with the U.S.A. and the countries of Western Europe is notorious, and must be remedied. Further, in spite of the scholarship system, including the recent State scholarships, there is still too much selection by wealth, with the result that while a few well-to-do young men† take up precious places of which they will be unable to make proper use, entry is denied to those poor young men and women who would better serve both their own interests and those of the country if they could be enabled to graduate at a university.

As is well known, the Barlow Committee in its Report on Scientific Man Power‡ stated that the doubling of the number of scientists and technologists within the next ten years was a matter of urgency, and this estimate has been generally accepted as a correct assessment of our minimum needs. At the same time the balance between the arts and sciences must be preserved, and for this purpose a doubling of our university population will not suffice. It thus becomes a matter of high policy to ensure that the Government gives the universities every possible help and impulse in their programme of expansion. The increase of funds made available to the University Grants Committee is

\* There is, equally, a tendency on the part of civilians to call for indiscriminate cuts in defence expenditure.

† Probably not young women.

‡ Cmd. 6824.

good, and the Treasury deserves great credit for it. But more needs to be done, and directly relaxation of the immediate stringency permits, building for university purposes deserves a higher priority than has hitherto been given to it. In the meanwhile, the charges made by the keepers of lodging-houses in university towns constitute a very serious problem, and it is at least questionable whether powers should not be given to requisition for the purpose of establishing hostels until some more satisfactory solution of the problem can be achieved.

As for the question whether the Government should not do more to ensure that the universities give their undergraduates the type of education that modern conditions demand, this raises a number of controversial problems, including the most thorny of them all, the sacred right of academic freedom. This is indeed more than a mere shibboleth, and broadly speaking it is best that the universities should be left free to educate their pupils after their own fashion; but it is so not because universities are particularly sacrosanct institutions to be kept immune from the criticisms of the vulgar, but because the public interest will as a rule be best served, and the pupils best educated, by these institutions and the individuals who compose them having a wide field of choice and experiment. Where British universities as a whole have clearly fallen behind those of other countries and the urgent demands of the country's situation, as in applied science and technology,\* the Government must clearly intervene and take steps to ensure that the gap be filled. Following the Report of the Percy Committee on Higher Technological Education, the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee has framed proposals for a closer linking of the higher technological institutions of the country with universities.† It is to be hoped that the Minister of Education and the University Grants Committee will concert action on these lines.

The fourth criterion was whether the inducements offered are such as to attract a fair share of the scientists trained by the universities into the Scientific Civil Service. The Government cannot hope to escape the consequences of the general shortage of scientific manpower and it would be disastrous were it so to raise its terms that industry and the universities could not compete, but in view of the importance of the work of scientists in the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, the Medical Research Council, the Agricultural Research Council, the Ministry of Supply, and other departments, it is essential that a reasonable proportion of the best scientific brains should be attracted into the Government service and that there should be a certain measure of interchange of staff between Government scientists on the one hand and industry and the universities on the other. The conditions proposed in the paper *The Scientific Civil Service*‡ and in substance accepted by the present Government

\* This is a generalization to which there must necessarily, and happily, be a number of qualifications and exceptions.

† *Colleges of Technology and Technical Manpower*. Issued by the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee. Heffer & Sons. 1s.

‡ Cmd. 6679 of 1945.

represent a considerable advance on the past, though apart perhaps from pension rights and security of tenure they are naturally far below what industry can offer by way of salary scales.

The four criteria laid down by the Select Committee bear mainly on the two questions of finding a sufficiency of trained men and women and of the correct apportionment of existing resources. It is possible to suggest a fifth criterion, namely whether the Governmental organization of scientific activities is sound in its principles. The Lord President of the Council is responsible for the formulation and execution of Government scientific policy. The Advisory Council on Scientific Policy, under the chairmanship of Sir Henry Tizard, has been set up to help him in this part of his duties. The Lord President is answerable for the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, the Medical Research Council, and the Agricultural Research Council. Each of these operates both by means of research conducted directly by its own staff and by means of co-operation, through grants, awards, and otherwise, with external organizations and institutions. Further, and distinct from the organizations responsible to the Lord President, a number of the civil departments, such as the Post Office, pursue research for their own purposes.

Such is the broad pattern of research for civil purposes. Apart from one or two fields in which considerations of national security have to be taken into account, the intention is to diffuse the knowledge acquired as widely as possible for the benefit of the industry, agriculture, and medicine of the nation, and on the whole this intention is carried out, though in one or two respects better publicity and interchange of information seem desirable.

In the field of defence, the Minister of Defence occupies the place corresponding with that of the Lord President in civil research. The Defence Research Policy Committee exists to advise him and the Chiefs of Staff "on matters connected with the formulation of scientific policy in the defence field"—principally, in effect, on the fixing of priorities and the allocation of resources: to ensure co-operation with the Advisory Council on Scientific Policy the chairman of both bodies is the same, Sir Henry Tizard, and the Secretary of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research is also a member of each committee. The Admiralty is in charge of research and development, affecting the Navy, whereas the Ministry of Supply is responsible for such work for the two other Service Departments: the General Staff and the Air Staff formulate the requirements, subject to technical advice about what is possible, whilst the staff of the Ministry is primarily concerned to find and execute means of fulfilling them.

This broad statement of the outlines of the organization necessarily ignores most of the niceties, some of which are not unimportant. The organization is not a tidy one, particularly, for example, when it becomes a question of tracing the inter-relation and allocation of duties between the Agricultural Research Council under the Lord President, on the one hand, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Department of Agriculture for Scotland, under their



respective Ministers, on the other. It represents an intelligent attempt to fit the organization of scientific research into the elaborate and intricate machinery of British government, rather than an attempt to set up science as a department of life and government on its own. In spite of some loss of unification and singleness of purpose, it seems on the whole that this approach is the right one, for science, apart from its educational value, exists to serve the purposes of the community and not to determine what these shall be.

But because the framework is sound it certainly should not be imagined that the structure is complete. The most obvious deficiency is in the facilities for research in the smaller industries. The field has not by any means been neglected but since approximately three-quarters of the concerns in the country employ fewer than three hundred people, the problem is one of primary importance. Many industries have their own research associations, which undertake work of varying character and utility; but in the past voluntary effort in this respect has been impeded by two serious obstacles, the reluctance of the small manufacturer to part with his secrets and his aversion from paying subscriptions to finance activities which he sometimes did not consider necessary. The latter difficulty, temporarily surmounted by a regulation empowering the Board of Trade to levy subscriptions from individual concerns, has now been tackled by the Industrial Organization and Development Act, 1947, which empowers the Department concerned to set up a development council for any industry that it deems appropriate; and one of the principal functions that may be assigned to a development council is promoting or undertaking scientific research. A development council has power to make levies and to obtain information, and it may fairly be said that the machinery for creating adequate research facilities for British industry now exists; whether that machinery will be properly and fully used is another question, and manpower will be a limiting factor here as in other fields. It would normally be quite wrong were influences outside any particular industry to foist any particular line of development upon it contrary to the opinion of those who had spent their lives working in it; but any such possibility seems to be precluded by the constitution of the development councils as laid down in the Industrial Organization Act.\* The object of the Act is rather to give free play to the progressive elements in industry than to place industry in a strait-jacket devised in Whitehall. It is to be hoped that the greatest possible use will be made of it.

Thus the first need is for the Government to do more to organize research in those smaller industries whose prosperity is essential to the national well-being. The second need is for the proportion of our resources allocated to military research to be reduced at the earliest possible moment consistent with national

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\* Section 2 (3). "A development council shall consist of members of the following categories, that is to say, in the case of every development council:

- (a) persons capable of representing the interests of persons carrying on business in the industry,
- (b) persons capable of representing the interests of persons employed in the industry, and
- (c) other persons . . . (referred to in this Act as 'the independent members').

security; and for a strict scrutiny to be established to that end.

The third demand of the situation is that a new relationship, for this country, shall be established between science and technology. Steps must be taken, by means of making more adequate provision for degrees in various technologies, and perhaps by founding great national institutes of technology comparable with those of the United States and Germany, to attract into technology a fair proportion—and of course not more than a fair proportion—of the scientific talent of the country.

Finally, the fourth desideratum that emerges from this review is that, in order to promote the necessary exchange between academic science, Government science, and industry, provision should be made for scientists to be interchanged between them without material loss to themselves. The first two can scarcely hope to compete with the last in material rewards, and although the security they have to offer may to some extent compensate for the higher salaries, the disparity cannot, in all probability, be wholly removed in the foreseeable future; but it should not be beyond the wit of man to devise some form of seconding from one branch of activity to another that should meet the need.

In the field of science, the paramount need, if Great Britain is to play a part in the future at all comparable with her rôle in the past, is for constant examination and consideration of the contribution that science has to make and of the methods whereby it can be made. It is in the hope of demonstrating this point, and of drawing attention to one or two lines of approach, that a layman ventures to intrude into this highly complex and technical subject.

## THE FATE OF THE ITALIAN COLONIES

BY L. JAMES

BY the terms of the Italian peace treaty which came into force on September 15 of this year, Italy was obliged to renounce her sovereignty over her overseas empire. The disposal of these colonies awaits a final settlement by the major powers; this must be reached, according to the terms of the treaty, by September 1948. So far, the Dodecanese Islands have been awarded to Greece, but the only part of the Italian empire in Africa whose fate has been decided is Ethiopia. Apart from the eastern area of the Ogaden (sometimes called Abyssinian Somaliland) which continues under British Military Administration, Ethiopia has regained her pre-1935 independent status and territory. Although the Emperor has expressed some fears about this continuation he has been assured that Ethiopia's final sovereignty over the area is not in question. The remaining three territories formerly constituting the Italian African empire, Eritrea, Italian Somaliland, and Libya, remain for the present under British control, with the exception of the interior region of Libya which is under French administration.

The three territories of Eritrea, Italian Somaliland and Libya have a total area of some 890,000 square miles, but the greater part of this total consists of desert and semi-desert; they contain only very small areas favourable for human settlement. Their total population amounts only to two and a half millions (Eritrea: 600,573—1931 Census; Italian Somaliland: 1,021,572—1931 Census; Libya: 888,401—1938 Census). In the period when Africa was being divided up into colonies and protectorates at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, Italy failed to acquire the two areas she wanted most. The French forestalled her in Tunis when they occupied this area in 1881, and the Abyssinians, by their defeat of the Italians at Adowa in 1896, were able to reject the Italian efforts to subjugate their country, and only when Italy's capacity for waging war had become immeasurably superior to that of the Abyssinians, did Ethiopia pass into Italian hands (1935-1936). By the 1914-1918 war Italy had acquired her three separate territories in eastern and northern Africa; as a result of the 1915 Treaty of London, the two colonies of Italian Somaliland and Libya received some additional territory after the end of the 1914-1918 war, but these gains were not of a sensational nature. The western frontier of Libya with Algeria was extended in 1919 to run from Ghadames to the Tummo (War Mountains) and in 1925 Britain ceded the more valuable Jubaland territory to Italian



Somaliland. A further frontier change took place in 1925 when Egypt ceded the small oasis of Jaghub to Libya. These changes in the boundaries of Libya were of comparatively little significance since the frontiers run for hundreds of miles through desert.

The Italian empire in Africa began with the purchase in 1869 of the port of Assab on the Red Sea coast, by an Italian shipping company. The money for this venture however was supplied by the Italian Government. The Egyptians who occupied this stretch of the Red Sea coast at this period made some objections, but nevertheless in 1880 Assab was declared to be permanently occupied by the Italian Government and two years later became a crown colony. In 1885 the Italians further occupied Massawa and on this occasion they had the prior approval of Great Britain. The Italians, gradually extending their occupation of territory around this port, very soon aroused the suspicions of the ruler of Ethiopia and in 1887 they suffered a defeat at the hands of the Abyssinians at Dogali. With the death of the Emperor of Ethiopia in 1889 the country became involved in one of its numerous internecine struggles over the question of the succession. Menelik, one of the claimants to the title, invited Italy to intervene on his behalf, and in the famous Treaty of Ucciali, signed in 1889, Italy obtained a portion of the Ethiopian plateau. Although Italy recognized Menelik as the Emperor, and he in turn recognized the Italian possessions on the Red Sea coast (which became in 1890 the colony of Eritrea) the Italians thought of the Treaty of Ucciali as the beginning of Italian protection over the whole of Ethiopia, and in 1891 Britain recognized Ethiopia as being within the Italian sphere of influence in return for Italy recognizing Britain's special interest in the Upper Nile region. Menelik, however, was anxious to maintain a complete independence and the hopes of Italy were dashed when General Baratieri's tactical mistakes at Adowa in 1896 ended Italy's aspirations in Ethiopia for forty years. In the peace made at Addis Ababa in the same year, Italy recognized the complete independence of Ethiopia but kept Eritrea; the frontiers of this colony were subject to a number of adjustments and the Danakil frontier was fixed in 1908.

From the first, Eritrea was a completely artificial unit with no physical or ethnic unity. It was brought into existence through the historical accidents of the late nineteenth century; it is a unit without distinctive traditions and it has failed to arouse any loyalty akin to nationalism. Its inhabitants are divided between the people of the southern plateau (who are racially and linguistically allied to the inhabitants over the frontier in Ethiopia) and the Moslem peoples of the northern plateau and coastlands. There exists no strong reason why this political unit should continue; schemes have been put forward for its dismemberment, and Ethiopia has claimed that it should be incorporated into an enlarged Ethiopia. Since the re-establishment of her independence her rulers have made some extravagant claims to neighbouring territory, either on grounds of "historic right" (nearly always a dangerous and

pernicious doctrine when applied by young and exuberant nationalists) or because they believe that Ethiopia is entitled to compensation for the miseries and losses endured under Italian rule. Ethiopia may legitimately claim part of Eritrea but her claim to the whole on grounds of "historic right" is patently absurd, and only slightly less realist than the Egyptian claim to the port of Massawa occupied together with neighbouring areas on the Red Sea coast from 1864 until the Sudan revolt forced Egypt to withdraw in 1884.

If Eritrea is not to remain a separate political unit, it ought to be partitioned between the Sudan and Ethiopia, and the actual division needs to be based on historical, ethnic and economic factors. The centre of the colony is occupied by a plateau which is essentially a continuation of the Ethiopian highland area. In the south it has an elevation of 7,000-8,000 feet, and westwards it merges into an arid plain area that is part of the Sudan; its eastern edge is fairly sharp and overlooks a narrow coastal plain. The only settled area of the colony is the high southern plateau occupied by the Tigrinya-speaking people who, by their Christian religion and racial origins, form part of the Tigray province of Ethiopia. When the Italians conquered Ethiopia in 1935-1936 they re-organized the administrative regions and re-united the Tigray province within the Eritrean division. Since the occupation by the British the old pre-1935 frontier has been re-established and the Tigray unit has again been divided. On ethnic grounds this area of Eritrea ought to be included in an enlarged Ethiopia.

The port of Massawa and the Danakil coastal strip ought also to be included in Ethiopia because of the latter's need for an economic outlet to the sea. If Ethiopia is to become a modern State, she must secure better links with the outside world. Although the port of Massawa is situated in the Moslem belt and has no real ethnic connections with Ethiopia, its inclusion within an enlarged Ethiopia is urged on the grounds that this port is essentially an outlet for northern Ethiopia; the coastal strip south of Massawa consists of an extremely arid and sparsely populated desert area of importance only because it contains the port of Assab which is the terminus of the road built by the Italians leading to Dessie, and this road serves central Ethiopia. The remaining part of Eritrea in the north is occupied by mostly rural Moslem groups and, although they speak many different languages, one factor that unites them is their dislike of the Abyssinians. Their real affinities lie with their fellow Moslems in the Sudan.

Although the Tigrinya speaking peoples are closely allied with their kinsfolk over the border in Ethiopia, they are not wholly agreed about the desirability of being incorporated within Ethiopia; there are two main groups, those who seek complete and immediate incorporation within Ethiopia (the Unionists), and those who wish to be associated with Ethiopia in some kind of federal union which offers the ex-Eritrean group complete autonomy (the Federalists). There is a minority that is even prepared to argue in favour of

the Tigrinya-speaking peoples of Ethiopia being united with Eritrea into a separate political unit, but this is scarcely a realist attitude. The Federalist argument that the Tigrinya-speaking people of Eritrea ought to have a separate and special status within Ethiopia having their capital at Asmara, is justifiable because the Italians spent very large sums on development schemes during their fifty years of administration of this area. They built good roads and constructed modern buildings and gave the area a sound health service; as in the case of their other colonies, they spent more money in the colony than they received from it. There is little to be said for allowing any area in Africa to slide back because it is all too difficult to bring progress. Although the present rulers are making numerous efforts to modernize their country, the Ethiopian standard of administration is very backward. The Ethiopians have emerged from the 1939-1945 war in a very suspicious frame of mind and reject anything that savours of foreign interference, but the unqualified incorporation of the Tigray province of Eritrea into Ethiopia ought not to take place until the Abyssinian administrative capacity has improved. There is quite a good case for calling in UNO to assist in the administration of this area, or at least that it should exercise a supervisory control over the Tigray province temporarily, without prejudice to the final Ethiopian sovereignty.

Another problem in the settlement of Eritrea is the fate of the comparatively large Italian colony living there. Apart from the trading element which has invested large sums in it, the Italians include many with technical abilities needed by the colony to maintain and improve the general standard of life. Eritrea is a poor area from the viewpoint of its economic potentialities, and the cost of the British Military Administration is partly financed from the British Treasury. The Italians of course are anxious about their future and some hope for an eventual return of the colony to Italy, although the majority realize that the most that can be expected is a decision to place the colony under UNO with Italy undertaking the rôle of trustee.

The Italian colony of Somaliland came into existence in 1889, but its frontiers remained arbitrary and uncertain, and it was the Somaliland-Ethiopian frontier "incident" of 1935 that was the signal for the Italian conquest of Ethiopia. The discussion of the future of this colony at the Paris meeting of the Foreign Secretaries in April 1946 brought the interesting and useful suggestion by Mr. Bevin that a greater Somaliland should be created which would include the British and Italian Somalilands and the Ogaden districts of Ethiopia. This suggestion has been favourably received by those anxious to secure frontiers which bear a close relationship to geographical, ethnic and economic realities. The frontiers over most of the African continent are extremely unsatisfactory, for most of them came into existence as a result of the rivalries between the powers during the period of the scramble for Africa. In the case of the Somali, the frontiers imposed on north-east Africa divided this homogeneous people between four different political units (British, French



and Italian Somalilands and the Ogaden district of Ethiopia) and the Somali frontiers have remained ill-defined and in practice have had little meaning for this nomadic tribe in search of fresh pastures for its large herds and flocks. The creation of a large Somali unit—the three territories specified by Mr. Bevin make up an area of some 350,000 square miles—would bring together in one political unit the Somali people whose total number is roughly three millions. Such a unit offers a useful example in working out the principle of integration that it is so urgently needed in the African continent.

Mr. Bevin did not include the small unit of French Somaliland in his proposal for a greater Somalia, but it should be noted that the Somalis number only about a third of the total population (40,000) of French Somaliland. There is also the important point that French Somaliland contains Jibuti, the terminus of the Addis Ababa railway which is the outlet for central Ethiopia. The proposal to include the Ogaden district of Ethiopia in the greater Somaliland is obviously sound, but the rulers of Ethiopia have included aspirations to incorporate Italian Somaliland in a greater Ethiopia rather than actually lose territory to the proposed new unit of Somalia. It is unlikely, therefore, that they will be willing to forgo their territorial ambitions, and although it can be argued that Ethiopia is likely to get an addition of territory in the Tigray area of Eritrea, and therefore could regard this as compensation for the loss of the Ogaden, in fact the rulers of Ethiopia will resist any encroachment upon their 1935 frontiers and, on the contrary, press for additions of territory from the whole or part of Eritrea and Italian Somaliland.

That the future of Italian Somaliland ought not to be entrusted to Ethiopia is beyond question: to take only the most outstanding point, the dominant group of Ethiopia consists of the Amharic-speaking Christians, and the history of Ethiopia is very largely the struggle to preserve this Christian island in the midst of an Islamic sea. It is this struggle that has given the people of Amhara their distinctive tradition and solidarity, and has been the outstanding factor in the maintenance of Ethiopian independence. Undoubtedly the influence of Italian rule has resulted in the emergence of something approaching a national consciousness among the diverse peoples who occupy the Ethiopian plateau, but the view of Ethiopia as a nation-State on European lines is incorrect. Right up to modern times Ethiopia has been merely a conglomeration of provinces and districts, ill-defined, loosely connected, and generally at war with each other. Regionalism is extremely strong and owing to the disaffections of local rulers, greatly helped the Italians in their 1935-1936 campaign. There is certainly no sound reason why the pre-1935 frontiers should be considered sacrosanct, on the ground of their antiquity, or because of their ethnic or geographical correctness. The claims put forward by the Ethiopian rulers to extensive additions of territory must be considered as the tendency so frequently manifested by nations emerging from foreign domination; in seeking independence for themselves, they seem all too ready to deny

it to the neighbouring peoples they desire to incorporate by drawing frontiers as far afield as possible.

In deciding the future of Italian Somaliland, Mr. Bevin's suggestion for a greater Somaliland is thus by far the most hopeful one. The actual administration of the nomadic Somali is no easy task; the tribe is turbulent and divided by numerous conflicts. Cattle raiding has long been an established tradition, and adds to the difficulties of administration. The whole of this area is arid; poor scrubland predominates, and only in the Nogal, Webi-Shebeli and Juba rivers can agriculture be practised. The Italians spent considerable sums in extending irrigation, and they had some success in growing crops like cotton, sugar-cane and maize, but the experiment of planting depended upon a liberal supply of money from the homeland. Efforts to get the Somali to take up settled agriculture have not been very successful. They think in terms of herds of goats, cattle, camels and sheep, and of quantity rather than quality. As a consequence of such large herds, overgrazing occurs in many areas, and soil erosion follows. This is always a problem in semi-arid areas where keeping animals gives social status. The Somali, like most nomad pastoral peoples, do not welcome attempts to re-orientate their attitude, but unless they can be persuaded to reduce their herds and increase quality they can only look forward to a progressive deterioration of their grasslands. The main hope for the future lies in improving the water supplies by tapping underground sources and building dams and introducing a system of controlled grazing.

The new Somalia will quite obviously require the assistance and supervision which can only come from a power experienced in the administration of backward peoples. UNO will undoubtedly assume the ultimate responsibility for its control and welfare but it seems not unlikely that Britain, which is at the moment administering, will become the power exercising the trusteeship, and thus the present military control would be turned into a civil administration, until such time as the Somali have developed to the point where they can "stand by themselves in the strenuous conditions of the modern world."

Owing to the great importance of Libya in Mediterranean strategy, many powers are interested in its fate. It consists of the two separate areas of Cyrenaica and Tripolitania, backed by the Fezzan and the Libyan deserts. The greater part of Libya's total of 680,000 square miles consists of desert capable of supporting only a small nomadic population.

Before Italy acquired this colony in 1912, it was part of the Turkish empire; during the eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries the Turkish connection was only nominal and the colony was ruled by the Karamanli dynasty. In the nineteenth century the Senussi came to dominate Cyrenaica. This Moslem sect is named after its founder, El Sayed Mohamed El Senussi (1787-1859), who preached a puritanical gospel, urging a return to the early Moslem faith when it was uncontaminated by Christianity or city life. Under

his leadership and that of his successors, the influence of the sect spread over a large area of the Sahara and came into conflict with the French in the area round Lake Chad. Cyrenaica remained its essential homeland, however, with its centre in Jaghbub. This oasis contains the tomb of the Grand Senussi (the main reason why Italy put pressure on Egypt to cede this remote oasis in 1925) but the Senussi headquarters were transferred to the even more remote oasis of Kufra when Turkish rule pressed too closely on the sect in the later nineteenth century.

When the Italians invaded Libya in 1912 the Senussi had accepted the Turkish overlordship, and the Turks encouraged them to resist the Italian invaders. This opposition lasted until the early 'thirties. During the 1914-1918 war the Italians completely lost control of the interior and were able to maintain their garrisons only at odd points on the littoral. The Senussi, aided by Turkish and German money and leadership, even attempted an invasion of Egypt, but they were repulsed. They had never succeeded in including Tripolitania in their territory, and the two areas of Cyrenaica and Tripolitania have evolved along different lines over the last decades. In both regions the population is Arab, but there is a Berber element; Tripolitania contains roughly three-quarters of Libya's total population. The Italians encountered opposition from both regions in the course of the 1914-1918 war as the Arab peoples of Libya felt that they were fighting to obtain their independence. The way in which the Turks had yielded up Libya to the Italian invaders encouraged the Libyans to feel that they were entitled to claim complete independence. After 1918 the Italians fairly soon put an end to opposition in Tripolitania, and in their subsequent administration relied greatly on the co-operation of a large pro-Italian element. In Cyrenaica the Senussi kept up their opposition to the Italians until the efforts of General Graziani at last succeeded in 1931. The measures used in these campaigns against the Senussi tribesmen were extremely ruthless and form one of the worst chapters in any colonial record. Inevitably Cyrenaica suffered great losses of men and livestock in the course of the Italian efforts to put down Senussi opposition. The leader of the Senussi, El Sayed Idris, went into exile in Egypt after the coming of Fascism to Italy, but the campaign was carried on in his name. Italian methods and their final success in 1931 drove many Libyans into exile.

When war broke out in 1939 these Libyans in exile saw it as an opportunity to free their country from its Italian rulers and set up an independent State. After Italy joined Germany in 1940, the Libyans raised the Libyan Arab Force which gave great assistance to the Allies in their Libyan campaign of 1940-1942. On a visit to the Middle East in January 1942, the British Foreign Secretary thanked El Sayed Idris for his help and promised that "at the end of the war, the Senussis in Cyrenaica will in no circumstances fall under Italian domination." The expulsion of the Germans and Italians from North Africa in 1943 brought Cyrenaica and Tripolitania under the control of the



British Military Administration; the Fezzan, captured by French forces, has remained under the control of France. Pending a final solution to the problem of how the Italian colonies shall be disposed of, the British have a difficult task as the interim authority in Cyrenaica and Tripolitania. The British promise to the Senussi that the Italians would not be permitted to return, along with the withdrawal of Italian nationals and the fact that the Senussi are united in their acceptance of El Sayed Idris as their leader, has made the task rather easier in Cyrenaica than in Tripolitania. There, the British have given no definite promise that the Italians will not be allowed to return and some 46,000 Italians remain amid a total of some 685,000 Arabs; although in 1921 the Tripolitani asked El Sayed Idris to assume leadership for all Libya, there are numerous divisions among the Arabs of this region and they are by no means so completely united as are the Senussi.

The general line of policy pursued by the British has been laid down by the necessity of observing the Hague Convention dealing with the administration of enemy occupied territory. In Cyrenaica the withdrawal of the Italian population has eased the problem, and Arabs have taken over again the lands from which they were displaced. Economically, large sums were poured into the scheme for Italian colonization in Libya. Although this was very efficiently planned and executed, it disregarded normal economic factors and was designed to assist Italian economy by making up deficiencies in the homeland and to help Italy solve her problems arising from population pressure. In Tripolitania the Italian colony, shorn of its fascist elements, is not unnaturally anxious about its future. As the Hague Convention permits changes to take place only if necessitated by military reasons, the British have left many Italians in administrative and professional posts, and govern the territory on the basis of Italian law, purged of its fascist elements of course. The Arabs have not always understood the fact that British Military Administration policy is dictated and restricted by the Hague Convention but, apart from the anti-Semitic riots of November 1945, relations between Arabs, Italians and the administration have been on the whole friendly. The uncertainty of the last five years has tended to encourage the more extreme elements among the Arabs, and there is a large and growing group seeking unconditional and complete independence.

Although the Tripolitani are by no means so united as the Senussi they also look to El Sayed Idris as the natural leader of a united independent Libya. Mr. Bevin's proposal to the meeting of the Foreign Ministers at Paris in April 1946, that Libya should be granted complete independence, certainly reflects the wishes of the vast majority of the people of both Cyrenaica and Tripolitania. Independence would have tremendous repercussions throughout North Africa and the Middle East since the whole Arab world is seeking to free itself from outside control and the independence of Libya would clearly have a great significance for France in the neighbouring western ter-

territories of North Africa. Libyan independence would certainly hasten the day when France, now unwilling to do so, must make much greater concessions to the people of Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. France has therefore tended to favour some form of trusteeship for Libya and has proposed that the Italians should be allowed to return to Africa under the general supervision of UNO. The Americans too have favoured this course. Apart from asking for a frontier adjustment at Sollum and the return of the Jaghub oasis, Egypt has expressed the hope that Libya should be placed under Egyptian or Arab League trusteeship.

The wishes of the inhabitants should clearly be the real criteria in making the final decision; there can be little doubt that they seek independence. They wish neither for incorporation into neighbouring territories, nor for any form of trusteeship, either by any of the great powers or by Italy or Egypt.

Throughout North Africa and the Middle East, the most important single factor at work is the growth of a nationalism based on Islam as the common religion, and Arabic as a common language. The feeling of solidarity between the peoples of the Arab countries will undoubtedly grow stronger, and although the Arab League has many rifts and divisions within its ranks, it will tend to unite the Arab speaking world into one of the great divisions of mankind. The people of Libya, believing they have a clear right to complete independence, will closely associate themselves with the Arab League (it should be noted that the Secretary-General of the League is of Libyan origin) and share in what they feel is the common destiny of the Arab peoples.

The problem which tends to be overlooked by the Libyans in their claim for complete independence is that of economic resources. Libya is inherently a poor country, with no mineral or other outstanding source of wealth. Its agricultural basis is very restricted, and it is capable of only limited development in certain directions such as that of live-stock and the cultivation of certain fruits. The material progress achieved under the Italians in the field of social services was the result of generous but uneconomic financial assistance; Italian rule unfortunately did not give the colony a generous supply of trained technicians drawn from the Libyans themselves.

The authorities who will recommend Libya's final status to the four major powers would be wise to pay heed to the growing demand for complete independence among the Libyans and other Arab peoples. Nothing less will satisfy them, and since the western world has laid down in the Atlantic Charter that territorial changes ought to reflect "the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned" (Point Two), the only satisfactory way to decide the fate of Libya is to give complete and unconditional independence while offering technical and economic assistance under the aegis of an international body such as UNO.

*(The author, after a short period in England, has returned to his work at Farouk 1st University, Alexandria.)*

## CEYLON'S FUTURE

By T. REID, M.P.

**D**URING a century and a half of British rule Ceylon has progressed enormously. It has had in recent decades one of the best and most up-to-date Colonial administrations in the world; and British rule, just, lenient, efficient, incorruptible, was carried on in the interests of the Ceylonese.

They are a kindly, tolerant people and their lovely, well-watered island enables them to live free from the terrible poverty of India with its unreliable one-monsoon rains. The coconut palm and the rice field in the wet zones of Ceylon supply most of the essentials of the simple life and other products and industries supplement the prosperity of the island.

But educated Ceylonese never denied freedom of expression or of association under British rule, copying India next door, demanded, but always by constitutional means without violence, advances towards self-government. It was gradually granted by instalments without much resistance.

In 1931 the Donoughmore Constitution was a revolution in Colonial politics. It gave Ceylon self-government in internal affairs and set up ministries manned by legislators, elected by adult suffrage. The power of elected legislators without executive responsibility was superseded by a system which gave them power and the blessed boon and burden of responsibility. This constitution has functioned fairly well. But there is no half-way house between bureaucracy and democracy and in response to Ceylonese demands the Soulbury Constitution which came into force in October 1947 removes the three official nominated ministers, the Chief Secretary, Financial and Legal Secretaries, and gives a Prime Minister and his Ministers a voice in external affairs with the Governor; while a Senate is added to the lower House, now that the Governor's emergency veto is to be abolished.

Meanwhile, India and Burma have been granted independence, so why should it be denied to loyal Ceylon? And Marxist parties in Ceylon demand it, thus outbidding the moderates. So, Dominion status has been promised to Ceylon and the new Ceylon Government will negotiate with Britain about its implementation and the consequences of such implementation which are of great importance to Britain, the Empire and beyond.

During the war the Ceylonese leaders and people stood in with Britain. This was the result of former good British rule and above all of wise British statesmanship in meeting in time the natural desire of a subject people to rule themselves.



In Ceylon there is a plural Ceylonese society of about 4,000,000 Sinhalese, mostly Buddhists, 2,000,000 Tamils, Hindu in religion, some Moslems and about 10,000 Europeans. But the different races are not as hostile to each other as are the races of India; and the propagandist inciting people to racial hate never had much success in the island. The relations between British and Ceylonese are very friendly and Ceylonese leaders are well aware of their own helplessness internationally. A small section of the extreme left desires union with independent India but the leaders of the United National Party and the future and first Ceylon Prime Minister, Mr. Senanayaka, do not desire union with India on ideological, racial, fiscal or other grounds.

So, the question arises, how is Ceylon to be defended, and the obvious answer is, by Ceylon and the British Commonwealth and Empire. The Ceylonese rulers are too intelligent to rely on the squabbling United Nations Organization hamstrung by the veto. They see little prospect of security in a union or alliance with a now partitioned and distracted Hindustan. In fact they are faced with possible dangers, if not at once, at least in the future, from their oriental neighbours east and west, not to mention the all pervading dangers from an aggressive, tyrannical communist imperialism with its fifth column in every land.

The defence of Ceylon is not a problem affecting the Ceylonese alone. In the strategy of war the great natural harbour of Trincomalee, now a British naval base, is as important to-day as it has been for centuries. Colombo, one of the world's great ports, is a Clapham Junction of the east situated on the trade routes between east and west. The island of Ceylon itself, strategically and commercially, is situated in a key spot in the Indian Ocean.

Yet, under Dominion status the control of Ceylon would be completely in the hands of Ceylonese who may not in future elevate to power people like the present experienced, responsible rulers. At the elections held in September 1947, the United National Party won forty-two out of the ninety-five seats. It is a party that cuts across communal divisions. A Tamil communal party won a few seats, Independents won twenty-one seats and left wing groups more than a dozen. But no man can say who will win the elections in future or even what the effect will be of removing the three official ministers from what were key posts in the Constitution of 1931, and of depriving the Governor, British or otherwise, from executive functions under Dominion status in future. Ceylon may one day even decide to quit the Commonwealth, as the communists now desire her to do.

At this turning point in the island's history it behoves all concerned to think deeply, to think internationally, to eschew insularity and colour bars, white or brown. So far the Commonwealth has been composed of white peoples mainly British, except in the case of South Africa, where the white minority rules.

But Ceylon has led the way in attaining responsible government and using

it to fight side by side with its former ruler, Britain, in the great crisis of mankind from 1939 to 1945. Unless colour and race inhibitions are to decide grave issues in international politics there is no valid reason why Britain and Ceylon should not, before Dominion status is established, make effective, permanent and lasting arrangements for the defence of the island and the Commonwealth and Empire. Bases were freely given in the West Indies to America to enable her to defend the Panama Canal. South Africa gave Britain a naval base in South Africa. Naval bases may be given to America in the Mediterranean. In my opinion, formed by a lengthy knowledge of the Ceylonese, they would welcome the existence of such bases in Ceylon because they know from the recent war how necessary they are for the safety of their coveted island and because they have not a suspicion of hate for us nor we for them.

*(Member of Parliament for Swindon since 1945, the author was Mayor of Colombo 1919-1924, and Member of the Ceylon Legislature, 1926-1931.)*

## THE STUDY OF NATIONAL CHARACTER

BY SIR GEORGE SANSOM

THE art of living depends in large measure upon our ability to judge how others will behave in given situations. As we mature, experience within our own society gives us some useful general knowledge about the behaviour of individuals, but it is as a rule empiric and intuitive. Organized studies in human psychology have however made a good deal of progress in recent years, and perhaps we can look forward to the development of a truly scientific method of judging the character of our fellows—though too much certainty would deprive life of some interesting hazards. The study of national character has not made such advances, for we are still influenced by myths when we permit ourselves to make categorical assertions about the behaviour of men as members of a national community.

Most of us who pondered during the war on the nature of the enemy felt dissatisfied with the verdicts of the authorities on German or Japanese life. Their explanations of the conduct of whole peoples seemed to lack internal consistency and left us wondering whether they had all the evidence before them and, if so, whether they had used it without prejudice. Different writers drew different conclusions from the same facts, so that in the end we became confused and impatient. We began to ask ourselves whether there was such a thing as national character or whether it was not an altogether illegitimate concept. We knew that social anthropologists had done a great deal of useful and revealing work on the cultures of small communities, such as tribes of American Indians or Polynesian islanders, but most laymen felt that such studies had little bearing upon our understanding of complex modern societies. For my own part it happens that I have devoted some years to a study of the cultural history of the Japanese people, but I have always felt dissatisfied by my failure to discern some guiding principle which would account for seeming inconsistencies in their behaviour. I had to resign myself to describing as best I could the march of events and the growth of ideas without being able to fit them into a pattern, and I consoled myself by supposing that human behaviour was anyhow formless, irrational and unpredictable. No doubt for lack of training, I found little guidance in standard works on group psychology, and concluded sadly that it was only the creative artist and not the pedestrian student who could, by flashes of insight, illuminate the problems of national character. To take a modern instance, it appeared to me that Somerset Maugham's *Don Fernando* made the Spanish temperament more intelligible



than any treatise on Spain which I had read; and often a vivid line, a telling phrase in a novel or a poem seemed to light up obscure places in ancient or modern history. But if this was true, then the dilemma of the sober historian was a grave one, for he could not truly describe what he did not fully understand, and he could not fully understand what he did not truly describe. He could not fulfil his function as a historian unless his interpretation of events was based upon some valid working hypothesis as to human behaviour, since history is of little use if it tells us only what men do and not why they do it.

It was under the influence of reflections such as these that I opened a recent work on the national character of the Japanese. It is entitled *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*,\* a name designed to emphasize the seeming contradictions in the Japanese character—the aesthetic sensibility and unimaginative ruthlessness, loyalty and treachery, passionate interest in the new and fervent attachment to the old, discipline and insubordination, stoicism and sentimental self-pity. Dr. Ruth Benedict is a distinguished American cultural anthropologist, who was in 1944 invited by the U.S. Government to "spell out" what the Japanese were like. She was to use her professional techniques in order to furnish to the authorities a basis for judgment as to how the Japanese would behave when faced with the prospect of defeat. Her book is an account of her findings. It is a valuable book, for not only does it give in very clear language an accurate picture of certain dominant features of Japanese life, but also it encourages one to believe that, in skilled hands, the technique of the social anthropologist may presently be applied with success to the study of other great societies. As the author observes in her preliminary chapter:

One of the handicaps of the twentieth century is that we still have the vaguest notions not only of what makes Japan a nation of Japanese but of what makes the United States a nation of Americans, France a nation of Frenchmen and Russia a nation of Russians. Lacking this knowledge, each country misunderstands the other. We fear irreconcilable differences when the trouble is only between Tweedledum and Tweedledee, and we talk about common purposes when one nation by virtue of its whole experience has in mind a quite different course of action from the one we mean.

Nobody can deny the truth of that statement in an era when we swing violently from hopes of universal peace to fears of universal disaster. We really must learn something about the springs of conduct in the great organized societies of to-day, if we are to avoid blunders fatal to our civilization—assuming them to be avoidable. It will not do to be merely optimistic or merely pessimistic. We can at least make an effort to understand ourselves and one another; but it is a task which must be undertaken in a scientific spirit. "The job," says Dr. Benedict, "requires a certain tough-mindedness and a certain generosity. It requires tough-mindedness which people of good-will have sometimes condemned. These protagonists of One World have staked their hopes on convincing people of every corner of the earth that all the differences between East and West, black and white, Christian and Mohammedan are

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\* *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*. By Ruth Benedict. Secker & Warburg. 12s. 6d.

superficial and that all mankind is really like-minded." Tender-minded people seem to think that the brotherhood of man depends upon everybody thinking alike—a dreadful prospect of paternal unanimity. But "tough-minded people are content that differences should exist. They respect differences. Their goal is a world made safe for differences." These are sensible words which should be taken to heart by those who are now busy trying to impose their doctrines upon peoples utterly unprepared to receive them.

A systematic study of national differences requires also a certain generosity. "The comparative study of cultures cannot flourish when men are so defensive about their own way of life that it appears to them to be by definition the sole solution in the world." The English reader of that sentence may be tempted to remark that this is peculiarly true of Americans, but he had better be careful! For though Dr. Benedict readily admits that Americans are given to urging their favourite tenets on all nations, we may be sure that she could if called upon produce many rich examples of that habit from the contemporary life of other peoples.

I have dwelt upon the nature of Dr. Benedict's approach, because it seems to me that the important thing about her book is not so much the degree of its success in explaining the character of the Japanese people as the fact that the method she has used produces some extremely interesting results which no student of Japan can afford to neglect. It may be that she hits the mark so often because of her natural good judgment rather than because of her acquired techniques, but let us examine some of her findings. I think we shall conclude that her method, skilfully applied, is one which deserves respectful attention from historians. It would not be appropriate here to try to follow her argument in detail, for that would require a close discussion almost as long as her own book; but we may select one or two of her main conclusions and see how they were reached.

She opens by a chapter on the Japanese at war, and postulates that all the ways in which the Japanese departed from Western conventions are data on their view of life and on their convictions as to the whole duty of man. For the purpose of systematic study the student must free his mind of all judgment on the morality of these deviations, and apply himself to discovering on what assumptions they were based. She notes the apparent inconsistencies between the extreme rarity of surrender of Japanese troops and their habitual co-operative behaviour when they became prisoners; between the insistence of Japanese leaders that the Japanese spirit would conquer occidental materialism and the almost cheerful way in which they laid down their arms, without fighting in the last ditch, once the Emperor issued the order to surrender. How are these inconsistencies to be accounted for? In a closely argued chapter called "Taking one's proper station" she develops a very plausible theory of the reliance of the Japanese upon order and hierarchy which contrasts so strikingly with the American faith in freedom and equality. Though she makes due reser-

vations, I think that here she does not entirely free herself from American assumptions as to what is a good society. The importance of hierarchy is more easily understood by Europeans than by Americans, as she recognizes by quoting de Tocqueville, who was surprised to find that in the new Republic they trusted equality as they trusted nothing else. In their deep hierarchical sense the Japanese are perhaps not so exceptional as she makes them appear; but this possible lapse from objectivity by no means invalidates her reasoning. She goes on to show, by well-chosen illustrations, how "behaviour that recognized hierarchy is natural to them as breathing." But she sees, what some students of Japan have failed to recognize, that this is not a simple occidental authoritarianism. By examining evidence in past and contemporary history as to Japanese habits of behaviour in the family, in social organization and indeed in almost all departments of life, she makes it clear that the Japanese idea of hierarchy depends upon a closely-knit system of mutual obligations. He who has rights has corresponding duties and the emphasis in Japanese life has always been on duties rather than on rights. All this is brought into perspective by a close analysis of the development of class-relationships in feudal Japan and of the way in which during Meiji reforms the class structure (thanks to a flexibility which is not present in more rigid systems of caste such as that of India) was carried over into the modern age without revolutionary disturbance. She makes a good point, which is often missed by those anxious to see root-and-branch reform in Japan, when she argues that there was in 1940 little difference between the Japanese system of government and that of such western European monarchies as Holland and Belgium. The true difference here was not in form but in functioning, because traditional spheres of authority persisted after the Meiji restoration of 1868. Thus the Meiji Constitution, which has just been replaced by a startlingly advanced charter of popular liberties that renounces war as an instrument of national policy, was on the whole a liberal document, which would have allowed a considerable growth of political freedom had it been worked with that intention. But Japanese tradition decreed otherwise; and the question therefore arises whether this new Constitution and other changes brought about during the period of occupation have any essential durability. History teaches, and I suppose social science confirms, that even when one people learns voluntarily from another, the lesson is always adapted by the pupil to his own capacity to assimilate. What Japan was taught by China, Rome by Greece and Gaul by Rome was only that for which their historical development had prepared them. This is something to be borne in mind when considering how far the indoctrination of defeated peoples at the hands of their conquerors is likely to succeed.

The remaining chapters of *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* are devoted to a systematic examination of certain well-established standards of conduct in Japan.

There is *on*, which expresses the complementary ideas of favour and grati-



tude. It stands however not for a sentiment but for a governing principle of behaviour. *On* is an obligation laid by one man upon another which has to be repaid not once for all but throughout life, so that by strict Japanese standards each man's existence is conditioned by the inescapable debt which he owes to his parents, his teacher and to even more incidental benefactors.

There is *giri*, which is on a somewhat lower plane and covers a man's obligations to himself rather than to others—the calls of his honour, his dignity, even his peace of mind. It stands for obligations incurred by one's own voluntary acts rather than laid upon one by circumstance. Dr. Benedict devotes a great deal of attention to analyzing these and other terms that express Japanese ideals and rules of conduct. She even sets forth a full "schematic table of Japanese obligations and their reciprocals" which seems to me to labour her points too much; and to give sharp definition to concepts which are less rigid than she supposes. I cannot help feeling that social anthropologists are on dangerous ground when they attempt to reduce complex and erratic human behaviour to simple, classifiable elements. I think that her use of etymology leads her into some errors. She takes a Japanese phrase like *kinodoku*, "poison of mind", which is used by way of apologetic thanks for some benefit conferred, and she infers from this that a Japanese, when he says 'Thank you' is letting it be known that he has a poisonous feeling because he has put himself under an obligation to a stranger. This really seems to me one excessive. Surely all that the speaker means is that he is sorry to have troubled his benefactor; and when we in English say to a friend that we are sorry to take one of his few cigarettes, we are not expressing grief or exposing a sore place in our self-esteem but merely making a decent social gesture. Without a very full linguistic equipment our social scientists should walk warily. But whether Dr. Benedict is right or wrong in these details, there is no doubt that her general thesis can be sustained. The life of the Japanese is governed, as the life of us other modern people is governed, by an extremely strict and coherent code of behaviour. It is not, in the occidental sense, a moral code. It does not derive from any religion, whether Buddhism or the indigenous Shinto. It is something unique which the Japanese have developed in their own seclusion. It is what makes their hierarchical system work, by providing checks and balances to prevent the extreme exercise of arbitrary power by one group or class. It means that the Japanese thrive, or appear to thrive, under a yoke of social pressure which would be quite intolerable to most, if not all occidental people. It is almost as if they said to themselves (not without some encouragement from Chinese philosophy in which the Book of Rites is canonical): 'Morals are hard to establish. Let us not endeavour to decide as to Good and Evil, but content ourselves with a strict code of rules of social conduct. Then we shall know what to do in all situations.'

Dr. Benedict does not tell us whether the U.S. Government took her advice. Their actions at the time of surrender, and in the beginning of the occupation

period, were in conformity with some of her findings, and it would be well if those who in the future will be responsible for relationships with Japan could pay some attention to the nature of traditional Japanese culture. It is very deeply rooted, and to destroy any of its essential features without putting something better in their place is only to leave bleeding wounds. We must not suppose that ours are the only valid beliefs and ours the only right practices. It is here that the social anthropologist can be useful, for if he is true to his profession he is immune to national prejudice.

Yet I must end on a slightly sceptical note, since after reading Dr. Benedict's remarkably penetrating study I still ask myself whether it has arrived at any firm conclusions about Japanese character which could not have been reached by empiric methods. I am not sure. She has well described how Japanese behave, she has explained phenomena which are puzzling to the Western mind; but we are still left wondering how the Japanese came to evolve their remarkable system of social ethics. The riddle is still unsolved. The historians must get to work again and see whether *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* will help to clear their minds, for however one looks at it, this is an important book.

(Sir George Sansom, K.C.M.G., who lived for many years in Japan, has been Adviser on Far Eastern Affairs at the British Embassy, Washington, since 1942.)

## MIGUEL DE CERVANTES

BY WILLIAM C. ATKINSON

“**O**LD soldiers never die.” Cervantes, the veteran campaigner, who was prouder of having fought at Lepanto than of having written *Don Quixote*, made a more forthright gesture of immortality than most when his call sounded. On that same April 23, 1616—if by a divergent calendar—on which Shakespeare died, Cervantes instead, “with his foot in the stirrup,” as he himself put it a few hours before his departure, rode off gallantly into the unknown. It is fitting that no record should remain of his last resting-place. His bones matter not: his spirit lives on. Fitting too that none should know just when or where he was born, leaving the present quater-centenary celebrations to hinge on his christening in the university town of Alcalá de Henares on October 9, 1547.

The link with Shakespeare has in the past evoked much spilling of ink and oratory, and for such as are content to murmur “genius” and to luxuriate in its inexplicability the theme is suggestive. At a crucial moment in the story of mankind, one of the great cross-roads of history, the two greatest powers of their day, predestined to clash because they stood for incompatibles, each threw up in a single master-mind the quintessence of its national spirit, a spokesman to all time of the glory that was England and the grandeur that was Spain. For the curious who would discover the real England, the real Spain, what deep down in their souls each would wish to be, nature provided a Shakespeare and a Cervantes. To Englishman and Spaniard they have the further function, that in moments of national eclipse, of aberration, of spiritual dejection, we may turn to them for a renewal of faith and resolve. This we have been, this therefore we have it in ourselves to be. The fault lies not in our stars, but in ourselves, that we are underlings.

If such be one of the abiding purposes of great minds, to help us to self-realization, centenaries in themselves have a more specific utility. They are occasions for critical stock-taking, for the attempt to discover more about the great mind, about the workings, if not the nature, of genius. Cervantes offers a peculiar interest in this respect. Shakespeare's gifts matured early and easily. Sprung of good family, nurtured in the lap of nature, fortunate in the moment of his impact on London and the theatre, gifted with an open-sesame to his chosen doors in the hall of fame, he knew no setback, took no single false step in his career as actor, manager, dramatist. At forty he was writing imperishable masterpieces, before he was fifty he had retired to acclaim



and affluence. There is no evidence that he ever had to wrestle either with life or with his craft. We, his readers, must wrestle back unaided from the creation to the creative process, and, asking ourselves how much we have uncovered, we catch his enigmatic smile.

Cervantes achieved his goal the hard way, by trial and error, with many a disappointment and thwarted ambition, with much deep reflection also on the problems of his craft; and among his most genial qualities is the way in which he takes his reader into his confidence. The ultimate secret, in Cervantes too, is doubtless his alone. Only another Cervantes could write another *Don Quixote*. But no genius was ever more conscious of his art as primarily a craft, and his pages are still an incomparable school of craftsmanship for the apprentice to letters. It was his *Exemplary Tales*, it will be remembered, that first inspired Scott with the urge to excel in fiction, and until crippled by illness, Scott tells us, he remained a constant reader of them. They are a fount no less of encouragement, for Cervantes' was a late flowering, after a lifetime of struggle against unpropitious circumstance. Had he died, as Shakespeare died, at fifty-two, he would be unknown to fame. The First Part of *Don Quixote* appeared when he was fifty-eight, the Second only ten years later. *Persiles y Sigismunda*, that was to be his masterpiece, he completed on his death-bed, penning the dedication but four days before, aged sixty-nine, he rode away.

The essential biography of a man of letters is that of his mind, and of external events only in so far as they helped to mould it. Piety moves us to hoard the scraps of fact or tradition that pass for knowledge of how Shakespeare lived, honesty to add that their importance for his plays is nil. With Cervantes it is otherwise, if only because in a life so prodigal of vicissitude the relation of experience to imaginative creation is raised in an acute form. The accident of birth under the shadow of a famous university—forerunner of that of Madrid, whither it was transferred in 1836—can have meant little to the fourth of seven children born to an hidalgo whose *hidalguía* could exempt him from taxation but not keep him out of prison for debt, and whose profession of itinerant leech-doctor pointed to that other university from which his son was to derive later his true liberal education—the open road. Some schooling we must assume, and an omnivorous taste for reading we can postulate with certainty; but no further fact, nor a single mention of his name, can be adduced between Miguel's christening and his appearance twenty-one years later in Madrid, but lately—in 1561—become the capital of Spain. There we find him in 1568 in the academy of one López de Hoyos, whether as belated student or as pupil-teacher we may not now know. We do know that he wrote verse there, and that it was to take another forty years and more to convince him "that of my prose much might be hoped, of my verse nothing." It was his first wrong turning.

But life was still only beginning. The peripatetic tradition was no prerog-

ative then of the scholar in the university. On the plane not of letters but of life it lay open to every Spaniard in that spacious age. Portugal, Italy, the Low Countries, India, the Americas—here was God's plenty of adventure, experience and the throws of fortune, not to speak of a useful enlargement of his sphere of action to a wanted man, should our author be in fact the Miguel de Cervantes for whose arrest a warrant was issued in Madrid in September 1569 "for having inflicted certain wounds on Antonio de Sigura," and who was under sentence to have his right hand cut off—the first narrow escape of genius—and be exiled from the kingdom for ten years. The Cervantes we know exiled himself, not wholly voluntarily, for twelve, and suffered instead the maiming of his left hand in battle. By December he was in Rome, where, after serving for a spell in the household of a cardinal, he turned soldier in time to figure honourably in the great naval victory over the Turk at Lepanto in 1571, "the most memorable and lofty occasion that past centuries have seen or centuries to come can hope to." Another four years of varied service, and Cervantes sailed for Spain in 1575, only to be captured at sea by Barbary pirates and carried to Algiers, where followed five years of servitude, diversified by five daring attempts at escape, and ransom at last—a second narrow escape of genius—as he lay in chains on a galley about to depart for Constantinople.

Back in Spain, we see him over a lustrum striving to make for himself a niche as a writer, composing occasional verse, frequenting the theatre, where Lope de Vega was then laying the foundations of the national drama, and publishing in 1585 his first book, a pastoral romance, the *Galatea*: it was his second wrong turning. He had just married, at thirty-seven, a girl of nineteen, who brought him in dowry some vineyards and an orchard situate in the village of Esquivias, between Madrid and Toledo, together with forty-five hens, a rooster, and four beehives. And there, in his bee-loud glade, he took his third wrong turning and wrote a number of plays, perhaps twenty or thirty, as he tells us long afterwards. Only two have survived, but even if it be true that "all were staged without tribute of cucumber or other missile, sans hisses, catcalls or turmoil," they failed to secure him either repute or a competence.

For fifteen years, from 1587, Cervantes was lost to literature. Employment as a government commissary requisitioning stores for the armed forces—the Invincible Armada was to sail to its doom in the following year—gave him at least such a knowledge of Andalusia, its highways and byways, its inns, farms and authorities, especially its authorities—he too knew imprisonment for irregularities in his accounts, and excommunication for laying hands on supplies belong to the Church—as made it almost impossible thereafter for him to place his characters anywhere in that part of Spain without reliving his own experiences. But as a career it had its drawbacks, and already in 1590 he was petitioning the King for a post in the Indies. The petition was

refused—it was the third narrow escape of genius—and the grinding hand-to-mouth existence began again. The year 1595 brought a prize of three silver spoons for a religious poem, but there was no symbolic efficacy in the award. In 1597 he was again in gaol, and not apparently for the last time. To keep his own affairs in order was beyond him, how much more so Treasury accounts. His disappearance from public view in 1600 argues most probably a return to Esquivias and the real beginning, for posterity, of his writing life. The remaining years are punctuated by little save the publication of successive works, *Don Quixote i* in 1605, the *Exemplary Tales* in 1613, *Eight Plays and Eight Interludes* and *Don Quixote ii* in 1615. The *Persiles* appeared posthumously, in 1617. In the first-mentioned year he moved to Valladolid, temporarily the capital, and in 1608 to Madrid, become the capital once again. Some slight patronage from a noble Maecenas he knew at length, and popular esteem; escape from penury never, nor from a household of women—his wife, two sisters, a daughter, a niece, a serving-maid—who must at times have strained even his charity.

Such was the background against which Cervantes, now in his fifties, was able at last to devote himself seriously to literature. Three times, as we have seen, he was all but lost to letters. Three times he took the wrong turning, and from his persistence to the end of his life in straying down those same unprofitable byways of poetry, the pastoral and the drama critics have elaborated the theory that he never knew the true nature of his genius. On his death-bed he was still promising a Second Part of the *Galatea*. *Passe encore*, for the pastoral novel was a respectable literary kind and a proper vehicle for the neo-Platonism of the Renaissance; nor was the *Galatea*, however imitative, the worst in the vein. But that strange "northern romance", the *Persiles y Sigismunda*, that to the modern reader fresh from *Don Quixote* commonly suggests the delirium of high fever, how explain its author's boldness to assert that it would be found to be the best work ever written in the language? It has become a commonplace of criticism to say that Cervantes is great in the measure in which he keeps close to experience, and that once he parts company with this genius deserts his pen. The contention has survived even the demonstration, on which modern Cervantes scholarship rests, that a serious and consistent core of thought runs through all his writings. This dichotomy between the thinker and the artist, however conceivable in the abstract—one may recall Socrates' vital discovery that a poet was often the last person to know what his poems really meant—is wholly inadmissible with Cervantes, in whose thought the aesthetic problems of literary creation are precisely the most recurrent and most seriously debated element. But the basic heresy, that realism is a prime merit in the imaginative writer, goes deeper still, and strikes at the roots of Cervantes' every expressed judgment on the literary art. In the preliminaries to *Don Quixote* is to be found one that to our mind is conclusive. Cervantes there passes verdict on the *Tragicomedy of Calixto and*



*Melibea* (1499), one of Spain's great books, in which however a highly idealistic and tragic conception of true love at issue with fate is obscured by such a masterly portrayal of grosser elements as has caused the work to be proclaimed in all the manuals a masterpiece of realism and to be re-christened after its most ignoble character, the bawd *Celestina*: "A divine book," writes Cervantes, "if only the human were less in evidence."

Cervantes' problem never was how to get experience on paper, but how to create. His earliest surviving play, hinging on his captivity in Algiers, was a mere transcription of experience, and is devoid of artistic merit; and whenever thereafter he allowed the memory of things seen or done to control his pen, as in certain of the *Exemplary Tales*, the result is the same. In his first prose work, the *Galatea*, he is at the other pole, in a wholly artificial world wherein courtiers disguised as shepherds discourse on ideal love; and here too Cervantes was conscious of failure—his Prologue admits it. And for the same reason. What Cervantes lacked at this stage was knowledge of the fundamentals of aesthetics. It is impossible to trace his development, to appraise his achievement, and in particular to give content to the claim that he is the father of the modern novel, unless we take into account not merely his commerce with life in the raw but his intellectual formation. Of him too we know that he had little Latin and less Greek. Of Italian literature, whether in the original or in Spanish translation, he had read at least the current masterpieces. But his ideas on the literary art did not come from fellow-artists; they came from writers on literary theory.

This was a fecund branch of critical writing in the Italy he knew, though again there may be reasons for thinking that he found all he needed in the works of his compatriots, and at a much later date. But whether he drank at the wells of Castelvetro, Robortelli and Piccolomini, or from López Pinciano's *Philosophía antigua poética* (Madrid, 1596), there can be no doubt that this discovery of Aristotle, even at second or third hand, with the revelation that literature had its own body of precept, its rules, was the great aesthetic experience of his life. It was there he came upon the fundamental principle of verisimilitude, that put experience in its place. Art was the imitation, not the reproduction, of nature; it told a story, with beginning, climax and dénouement, as nature did not, and it was no recommendation of the incidents composing the story that they had happened, but only that they could have happened. Better, that is, the impossible probable than the improbable possible. Cervantes learnt too that truth was not single and absolute, but multiple and relative. Historic truth, that dealt with recorded fact, was one thing; poetic truth, that dealt with the larger intangibles, was another. "On this account poetry is a more philosophical and more excellent thing than history: for poetry is chiefly conversant about general truth, history about particular." Literature, further, should instruct as well as delight: in giving aesthetic pleasure it should possess too a doctrinal content, in the sense

of a definite bearing on life and the business of living. He learnt finally that poetry was a matter of fable, conception and treatment, not of the accident of verse, that the epic, for example, could be in prose, and that the epic, incidentally, had this advantage over tragedy that, being narrative and of undetermined length, it allowed of episodic digressions and thereby of a greater variety of interest.

Here, and not in Cervantes' personal experience or mysterious "genius", we have the kernel of the modern novel. Where the sixteenth-century preceptists went beyond Aristotle was in extending the mantle of poetry to works written in prose and in creating thus for the prose romance—now equivalent to the epic—a place in the hierarchy of the kinds; and the re-emergence of the Byzantine novel, with the finding at the sack of Buda in 1526 of the Greek manuscript of Heliodorus' *Aethiopian History*, has here an obvious importance, which Cervantes himself was shortly to underline by modelling his *Persiles* on that very work. Where Cervantes went beyond the many other poets who sought to recreate the epic in what, quite apart from the peculiar prestige attaching to the epos at the Renaissance, was for Spain an epic age, was in acting upon this new licence and casting his epic in prose. Spain had already, as it happened, evolved the prose epic independently, in the romance of chivalry: López Pinciano admitted as much, and allowed that the best of these were not without merit. But inasmuch as they had not had access, as Cervantes had now, to the rules, they inevitably infringed these at every step, and most notably, to Cervantes, in the matters of verisimilitude, doctrinal content, and style.

But *Don Quixote* is not simply a romance of chivalry that keeps to the rules—the *Persiles* was to be Cervantes' effort to show what could be done with the Byzantine variety. Still less is it merely the parody of the kind that generations of readers, taking their warrant from the Prologue, have assumed it to be. Neither Heliodorus nor the *Amadis de Gaula* had heard of the theory of double truth. And neither to Aristotle, who formulated it, nor to the sixteenth-century preceptists who renewed its currency, had it occurred that the two truths could be contrasted for dramatic effect and that from their interaction something new in literature might come to birth. Historic truth, it is true, is to Aristotle but the record of past events and has its proper place in the epic when the hero is a figure of history. The poet must then build his fable around fact, limiting his imaginative licence to the episodic and contriving a poetic truth which shall be other than, but never in conflict with, historic truth. Cervantes' innovation lay in interpreting historic truth as the factual approach to reality, as an attitude of mind which does not go beyond the evidence of the senses, and in placing this in constant juxtaposition with that other attitude which rejects the evidence of the senses and holds things to mean—what the individual believes them to mean. To call this the conflict of realism and idealism is to confuse the issue. *Don Quixote's* world is as

real to him as Sancho Panza's other world is to him; more so, since it impels him to action and makes him a shaper of destiny, his own and other people's, whereas Sancho can only accept passively such cards as destiny may deal him. And Don Quixote's truth is operative also in another direction. Sancho can perceive only his own truth, and holds his master mad. Don Quixote, in recognizing the existence and validity of Sancho's truth, admits with that logic that Sancho can never touch the possibility that, if there be two, there may be more. "This that to me is Mambrino's helmet," he says to his squire, "seems to you to be only a barber's basin, and perhaps another man will take it to be something else." This is the key-text in *Don Quixote*, and the clue to the fable is the clue also to the philosophy of life it enshrines.

We reach at this point an important question not only in Cervantes criticism but in the larger consideration of immortality in literature. No writer can command immortality. The artist can only give of his best and truest, according to his vision, to his own age, and hope that later ages may still be able to appreciate alike his sincerity and his message. Cervantes' two criteria, verisimilitude and the quest for philosophical truth, are still incumbent on the artist. But if truth be relative, and verisimilitude no less so—the fable, Cervantes reminds us, must always be wedded to the reader's understanding: he is the judge—then the survival value of any work of the imagination hinges on the peradventures that from age to age shape man's conception of the true and the probable. Cervantes himself has been in a particular measure the victim of this law. In *Don Quixote* he knew that he had achieved something new; that he had achieved immortality he did not know. To his contemporaries the book was a mine of joyous entertainment, no more. Its cardinal message of the relativity of truth lay beyond their apprehension, while a generation brought up on the romances of chivalry was not one to assess merit by verisimilitude. To Cervantes, and to his age, the *Persiles* was his masterpiece. Its readers, into whose ken the whole new world of the Americas had but lately swum, found nothing improbable in its misty northern geography; its doctrine was the pure milk of the Counter-reformation. Had Spain succeeded in her bid to re-impose the universality of that doctrine, and had man's imagination not shrunk along with his capacity for belief, the *Persiles* would to-day too be acclaimed the masterpiece, not *Don Quixote*.

*Don Quixote* would still be held the progenitor of the modern novel. For from this interplay of truth on two different planes there derived other novel-ties. First, the interplay of character. Previously, alike in the romance of chivalry, the picaresque tale, the pastoral novel, character is static. The hero is as spotless, the villain as deep-dyed, at the end as at the beginning; and should the two extremes meet, compromise being impossible, one must go under. Cervantes is the first to present character in solution, the product of an infinite becoming. It has been possible to plot the graph of the reciprocal



action of Don Quixote on Sancho, of Sancho on Don Quixote, and even to mark the point of intersection of the descending curve of the knight, as his faith gradually wilts under the incomprehension of a hostile world, with the ascending curve of his squire who, gradually catching his master's faith, ends the optimist of the two. If psychology has become the chosen field of the modern novel, it is to Cervantes we owe it. Second, humour. Humour, that "capacity or habit of mind which apprehends and appreciates the ludicrous sympathetically," is in essence a thing of two planes linked reciprocally by the spirit of tolerance and compromise. Single, dogmatic, truth cannot compromise, and humour is a stranger to it. There is wit in the *Persiles*, but no humour. And if humour is the hallmark of the modern novel, the touchstone of its humanity, again to Cervantes we owe it. Third, the roving comment on existence and the universe. The scope conceded by Aristotle to the epic for diversification of interest by episodic digression Cervantes expanded until the canvas of the novel became large as life itself; and even more noteworthy than the wealth of incident in *Don Quixote* is the wealth of philosophical reflection on life. By throwing Don Quixote and Sancho, each seeing the same things through different eyes, into such close company, he caused their conversation to develop into a running commentary, not merely on the latest adventure or the prospects of that to come, but on the whole gamut of experience and the nature of life and death. "The one good thing in the romances of chivalry," says the Cura in *Don Quixote*, "was the opportunity they allowed a man of understanding to exercise his parts. Now he might show himself an astrologer, now a cosmographer, a musician, a man knowledgeable on matters of state, even, if the whim took him, a necromancer." Or even, though the Cura did not say so, a philosopher. And if the modern novel is become the dominant kind in contemporary letters, capable as of old of entertaining an idle hour, holding children from play and old men from the chimney corner, yet capable no less of coming home to men's business and bosoms as guide, philosopher and friend, once more we must recognize where our indebtedness lies.

In his Epistle dedicatory of *Don Quixote ii*, Cervantes tell of the public curiosity to see this Second Part appear. "And none has desired it more than the great Emperor of China, who sent me a messenger a month ago with a letter in Chinese asking, nay begging me to send it him, inasmuch as he wished to found a College for the study of the Castilian tongue and was desirous that the text to be used should be *Don Quixote*. And along with this he would have me go to be Rector of the said College." The Emperor having omitted to send his travelling expenses, Cervantes stayed at home. But from China to Peru, *Don Quixote* is still the text for all who would know not merely the Castilian tongue but the finest flower of the Castilian genius. He is the poorer spirit who has not read it.

## DIALOGUE

BY R. N. CURREY

**I***F the earth stopped turning  
Would the seas fall from their sockets?*  
Asked my son.

Would fires fly off like rockets,  
And money drop from pockets,  
And eyes fall from eye-sockets?

*And where d'you think they'd fall to?*  
Asked my son.

*Look how the dusk is piling  
Up like snow,* said my son.

Gently drifting, softly filling  
Hollow valley and lane, and piling  
Over the trees to the skies' ceiling . . .

*But of course that would be space,*  
Said my son.

*Where are we going with all this turning?*  
Asked my son.

This snow snowing and sun burning,  
Wind blowing and rain raining,  
Tide flowing and trees leaning  
Against the wind of the world's turning . . .

*Turning where?*  
Asked my son.

Always asking and never knowing,  
Never coming and always going . . .

*Would the seas fall from their sockets?*  
Asked my son.

## THE CRAFTSMAN AS WITNESS

BY F. W. WENTWORTH-SHEILDS

IT is seldom that a painter lays down his brushes to write criticism. He is generally far too preoccupied with his own problems, his enthusiasms and prejudices to concern himself with the task of estimating the achievements or failures of other artists. This right and natural obsession with his own affairs is an obviously poor qualification for criticizing with sensitive impartiality. Furthermore, he is probably ill at ease with the unfamiliar medium of writing. On the other hand, just because he is a painter one may always expect, and sometimes get, deft and telling judgments that only a painter could make, the kind of empirical comments that are quite beyond the capacity of any professional critic who has had no experience as a practising artist.

Sickert writes : \* " I am convinced that it is impossible to approach art criticism except from the core, from the material and its nature, outwards to its resulting message and to a consideration of the aims and effects, moral, social, political, aesthetic or sentimental, of the work." Sickert's critical writings are enriched, not only by the quality of painter's insight, but by an uncommon capacity for direct and fluent expression, a characteristic in common with his painting. He found the right word, phrase or illusion with the same unfaltering certainty as he found the right line, tone or colour. In his writing, there is no laborious paddling with words any more than in his canvases there is any tentative fumbling with paint. And because his approach is direct and certain it is also spontaneous and convincing.

" When I am writing on these subjects," he says, " I believe my only claim to utility is that I know myself to be quite incapable, by want of training as a student and writer, of authoritative synthesis. I therefore limit myself to a rôle that may be defined as the craftsman as witness. I endeavour to confine my testimony, as a witness should, to such aspects of the panorama of art history as have come under my own observation."

What then were his credentials as witness? And what aspects of the panorama of art history came under his observation? The questions demand a brief survey of his training and an inquiry into his influences and background. His career as an art student, which began at the Slade when he was twenty, was preceded by three years' experience on the stage. Two years later, he met Whistler who liked him, saw his promise and took him to his studio as an

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\* *A Free House, or The Artist as Craftsman.* Being the writings of Walter Richard Sickert. Edited by Osbert Sitwell. Macmillan. 25s.



apprentice. The implied compliment was tremendous. Whistler, brilliant, magnetic and famous, was above all things discerning in his choice of associates. It was inevitable that Sickert, learning to paint, draw and etch under Whistler's explicit supervision, should have absorbed much of the master's habits of mind and methods of work. A young man with less individuality might well have been submerged. Yet, although it is clear that Sickert regarded Whistler with considerable respect and affection, it is equally clear that he preserved his own identity by assimilating only so much as he needed for his personal equipment. Beyond that, he maintained a reserve and developed his own ideas. Nevertheless, his association with Whistler was an indelible experience and it is interesting to analyse the nature and extent of its influence. In broad terms, it is accurate to say that while Sickert admired Whistler as a craftsman and shared his reverence for the materials of their art, he had small sympathy for Whistlerian practice. What he did acquire from Whistler was a lasting delight in the art of oil painting, its nature and its proper use. If this sounds obvious and no more than you might expect, consider the particular significance that it derives from Sickert's own definition of what he called *la bonne peinture*. "As much, and the kind of truth, shall I say?, as can be expressed by the clean and frank juxtaposition of pastes, considered as opaque rather than transparent, and related to each other in colour and values by the deliberate and conscious act of the painter."

Now consider how this definition explains his enthusiastic appraisal of Whistler's little panels, his *pochades*. "The relation and keeping of tone is marvellous in its severe restriction. It is this that is strong painting. No sign of effort with immense result. He will give you in a space, nine inches by four, an angry sea, piled up and running in, as no painter ever did before. The extraordinary beauty and truth of the relative colours, and the exquisite precision of the spaces, have compelled infinity and movement into an architectural formula of eternal beauty. Never was instrument better understood and more fully exploited than Whistler has understood and exploited oil paint in these panels." His fervent admiration is infectious. This was the kind of painting that he loved. Indeed it was the kind of painting that he practised. His own phrase, "the extraordinary beauty and truth of relative colours and the exquisite precision of the spaces," applies justly to a large number of his own paintings. This was the Whistler he revered, Whistler the Impressionist, painting directly and with masterly certainty, undistracted by flirtations with the Japanese, unencumbered by notions of Art for Art's sake.

He lamented the fact that Whistler should have discarded the sound influence of his French training for a clutter of self-conscious ephemeral ideas which diluted the potency of his work and obscured his real *métier*. "More and more do I find myself confirmed in the opinion," he writes sadly, "that Whistler's too tasteful, too feminine and too impatient talent had need for its development to remain in the severe and informed surroundings of Paris, the

robust soil where his art had its birth. A wholesome fear of the tongue of Degas, if nothing else, would perhaps have nipped in the bud his growing reliance on the *snobismes* of *réclame* and *mise-en-scène*."

Much later, in 1912, Sickert looked back over the years. "How much these pictures required the defence of the brilliant and sympathetic personality that produced them. What poor aesthetics they seem to-day! A certain vivid and superficial appreciativeness of Greece and Japan and Velasquez; a plant without roots and bearing no fruit . . ."

These extracts serve to define approximately the extent and limits of the Whistlerian influence. But it would be totally misleading to regard his influence as exclusive. In 1883 Whistler sent him to Paris as escort for the famous "Portrait of my Mother" which was to be exhibited in the Salon. He gave him letters of introduction to Degas and other painters. He entrusted him with a catalogue of his etchings which he was to present to Degas with the comment that Whistler was "amazing". Degas, who received him most cordially, made a profound impression on him. Sickert's subsequent and frequent visits to France strengthened a mutual regard and friendship which lasted until Degas died, in 1917. Although there is no detailed appreciation of the work of Degas in Sickert's writings, there is no doubt of the reverent affection he felt for "this truly great man" as he calls him. He quotes him frequently. As, for example: "I have often heard Degas say that in painting you must give the idea of the true by means of the false." Or again: "I remember Degas once pointing out to me how Monet always got his *masses d'aplomb* intuitively." If there is no explicit tribute in his writings, there is certainly an implied and handsome tribute in his paintings. Such works as the portrait of Victor Lecour (1922) and *The Trapeze* (1920) are precise evidence of the admiration that Degas provoked in him. But whereas he learned the approach to *la bonne peinture* at Whistler's hands, the example of Degas showed him an approach to draughtsmanship. "The bulk of the work of Degas is founded," he wrote, "like the old masters, on drawings."

So far, only the influences of two men have been discussed. Both were considerably older than Sickert. Both, in a broad category, were Impressionists. It is strange to consider that Sickert's close adherence to these two influences had hitherto prevented him from making any acknowledgment of the work of such painters as Cézanne, Gauguin, Van Gogh and Seurat. He had been backwards and forwards, many times, to and from the Continent. He had doubtless seen and discussed every aspect of contemporary French painting. Yet he had remained seemingly aloof from the new movements and ideas that had created a ferment in Paris. Until, in 1910, Roger Fry organized the first Post-Impressionist exhibition in London, at the Grafton Galleries. "It has caused a rumpus," Sickert wrote in *THE FORTNIGHTLY* of January 1911. "The rumpus has collected, and the crowd is quite willing to listen to reason and to learn. . . . John Bull and his lady, who love a joke, walk up and learn a few

things, some of which have been known in Europe for a decade and some for a quarter of a century . . ."

A rumpus there was. Painters and critics talked themselves hoarse in fierce and fevered discussion and argument. Some ranged themselves on the side of unqualified censure, others on the side of ecstatic approval. In his rôle of critic, Sickert was obliged to commit himself to an opinion. In his capacity as teacher, he felt that it was his responsibility to act as a calm, wise counsellor and pronounce clear and unmistakable judgment. He considered the hypothetical case of a student wrestling day after day with the exacting problems of drawing and painting. Supposing the student should come to him in bewilderment and say: "What about Matisse and Picasso?" The question has an almost strange topicality and it is no less difficult to answer to-day than it was thirty-six years ago. Sickert's reply was unequivocal. "I have heard the defence put forward for this stuff that these painters are so gifted that they have done everything that accomplishment can achieve, and that therefore only monstrosity is left to interest them. There is only one thing they have not done, that is the work of fine quality. If they had, they would not have left it off so soon and they would have found it takes a lifetime to develop a tiny talent to its utmost."

If he saw fit to dismiss the works of Matisse and Picasso in such round terms, it was surely because they were the very negation of the value that he had absorbed from Degas and Whistler, the values that he was handing on to the students whom he taught. But in his critical writings of this period, Cézanne emerges as a third and minor influence. Sickert had, of course, been familiar with his work for a long time. When his paintings first appeared in London, they were no novelty to him. There was a novelty, however, in watching the diligent attempts to build Cézanne's reputation into a gigantic monument. "Nothing can prevent his masterpieces from taking rank," he said, at the same time protesting that appreciation was becoming foolishly unrestrained. He admitted the unique quality of his work, admired him for his passionate and sincere research, but when Clive Bell wrote in his book entitled *Art*, "Cézanne is the type of the perfect artist," Sickert quoted the sentence and bracketed it with his own contradictory comment, "He is the archetype of the imperfect artist." There were two things about Cézanne, he said, ". . . the very real beauty of the tiny percentage of Cézanne successes, and the immense respect and sympathy inspired by Cézanne's character and industry. To criticize him is, morally, almost like criticizing an artist without arms . . ." Sickert complained of the absurdity of labelling Cézanne as a Post-Impressionist and derided the crazy, unstable structure of theories built on the uneasy foundation of Cézanne's utterance that all the forms of nature "*peuvent se ramener au cône, au cylindre et à la sphère.*" That, he scoffed, had been "written in all the current shilling manuals on drawing from time immemorial." He held that Cézanne was inextricably part of the Impressionist movement. It was cer-



tainly the Impressionist element in his work that appealed to Sickert. He deplored his drawing but admired his use of colour relationships to express recession and solidity inasmuch as they were applicable to, and a development of, *la bonne peinture*.

Another influence in his life, which deserves a fourth place, was his stay in Venice during the years 1900-1903. During that time, he looked with admiration at the great Venetian masters, and fell especially under the spell of Tintoretto. His handling of colour made a deep impression on Sickert, and he was enchanted particularly by the brilliant colours of the grounds which glow in a muted way through the semi-transparency of the overpainting, by his use of colours, not merely as agreeable adjuncts, but as leading elements in a picture. It is easy to see how aptly this conception of colour related itself to his Impressionist upbringing.

Apart from this reference to Tintoretto, this survey has been confined to describing the effect of three personalities on the process of Sickert's development. Of course, there were many others. During his long life from 1860-1942, a most distinguished concourse of painters peopled the years. There were Corot, Millet, Daumier, Courbet, Pissarro, Manet, Monet, Renoir, Rousseau, Gauguin, Van Gogh, Seurat and a hundred more of lesser stature. These artists represented "the panorama of art history that came under my observation." Sickert, who was eagerly interested in the work of other men, travelling often to the Continent, saw their paintings, made his own penetrating and balanced estimate, returned to London and continued to be Sickert. To have retained his own identity, more than that, to have made his own original contribution and, in so doing, to have won the high regard of his most distinguished contemporaries, is an indication of Sickert's calibre. The credentials of the craftsman as witness are unexceptionable.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### THE MARSHALL OFFER

*The Editor of THE FORTNIGHTLY,*

Sir,

In "Three Views on the Marshall Offer", published in the August 1947 issue of *THE FORTNIGHTLY*, Mr. H. G. Nicholas indicates conditions on which twenty billions of dollars may be voted by Congress; Mr. R. P. Schwarz intimates doubts of electoral approval and states reasons that should sway the electorate to pass favourably on the Marshall plan.

But Mr. Schwarz by no means exhausts the determining factors. He speaks of the cost as involving only three per cent. of U.S. national income. It is evident, however, that the cost will be this *plus* increased domestic prices to American consumers by reason of exportation of the commodities affected. Also, Mr. Schwarz writes as if there were a surplus of commodities available for exportation. It would be more realistic to make a list of such. I know of none except obsolete munitions of war—such as we are sending now to Greece and Turkey.

Furthermore, in appraising the prospects of the money being voted to implement the plan, these things should not be overlooked:

1. Secretary Marshall announced the plan as his personal contribution to the well-being of Europe and hence to the prospects of peace. I know of no explicit endorsement of the plan by President Truman, and Secretary Marshall's official status is but that of an adviser to the President. I am certain also that Secretary of the Treasury Snyder has never given his unqualified approval.
2. There were rumblings of discontent in Congress when the last loan was voted to Britain and the President's vetoes of the Taft-Hartley law (enacted over his veto) and of income tax relief (which barely failed in the Senate to pass over his veto) have certainly lessened the weight that Congress will accord to the President's recommendations.
3. Broadly considered, donations by Congress are a compulsory gift by American taxpayers—a contradiction in terms. The sole ground on which this donation could be made is the national security, and so far as appears, with Russia and her "satellites" excluded, such a loan may tend to detract from, rather than to further, the national security.

Yours faithfully,

CHARLES B. COLLINS.

1531 Shattuck Avenue,  
Berkeley—9, California,  
U.S.A.

## THE FORTNIGHTLY LIBRARY

### A SIGHTSEEING PILGRIM

BY C. NORTHCOTE PARKINSON

**A**RNOLD VON HARFF was a knight from the neighbourhood of Cologne who, in 1496, made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land by way of Rome, Alexandria and Cairo, returning by way of Constantinople, Spain and France. His account of the journey, written on his return, was circulated in manuscript and several contemporary copies of it still exist. It was not printed in German until 1860, and is now published in an English translation for the first time. Reliable in the main as a description of places visited, the work is not exactly a diary of travel. It was written as "a trusty sign-post" for other pilgrims and, nominally at least, for the author's overlord and patron, the Duke of Jülich. It omits as irrelevant, therefore, some parts of the journey as actually performed—divergencies from the beaten track which others need not, and perhaps should not, imitate. On the other hand, von Harff, who was only twenty-five when he set out, had rashly announced beforehand where he meant to go and refused to admit, on his return, that he had not been there. His narrative accordingly includes a brief and unconvincing description of Ceylon, India and the sources of the Nile, mostly borrowed from Marco Polo and Mandeville. This interlude has led some scholars to doubt the authenticity of the remainder. That it is genuine, however, is now generally admitted, and an English translation of it is the more to be welcomed. The Hakluyt Society has done well to sponsor such a work.\*

But if the Society was fully justified in publishing an English version of the *Pilgrimage*, it is still more to be congratulated on securing Mr. Malcolm Letts as editor. The rendering into English of a work written in a dialect of the Lower Rhine gave him, one imagines, no special difficulty. But his introduction, footnotes and bibliography are a model of good editorship. Without obtruding his own personality, he adds just as much explanation as is needed, showing at the same time a wide learning and an admirable restraint. He must share the credit for this volume, however, with the publisher, who has lavished on it the blessings of excellent paper and type, a strong binding and nearly fifty illustrations reproduced from the woodcuts of the German edition. Only in the absence of a map does this book fall short of perfection in its kind.

Von Harff was a pious man and journeyed at a time when the Indulgence traffic was already a scandal. Although occasionally sceptical about relics—as well he might be—he is careful to record the exact benefits to be derived from every shrine his itinerant touches. This continual balancing of a spiritual account—the debit side of which may, incidentally, be inferred—coupled with a Teutonic passion for recording distances, makes part of the narrative tedious. But the author was no ordinary pilgrim and it is to his interest in social customs, in commerce and in languages that the *Pilgrimage* owes most

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\* *The Pilgrimage of Arnold von Harff, Knight.* Translated from the German and edited by Malcolm Letts. Bernard Quaritch, for the Hakluyt Society (Vol. 94, Series 11). 45s.



of its value. He travelled for preference with merchants and, whenever possible, passed for one himself. This saved him, as he explains, from many of the discomforts and exactions to which pilgrims were exposed. It also saved him from the error of supposing that the overland trade to the East was languishing at the time that Vasco da Gama made his famous voyage. Whatever later historians may have thought, Von Harff at least knew better. Indeed, of the impressions gained from reading the *Pilgrimage*, the chief, perhaps, is of the well-established trading connection between East and West. It is with the author's account of Venice that this book's importance first becomes apparent.

Von Harff stayed at the Fondaco dei Tedeschi—the Venetian Staple of the German merchants, originally connected with the Hansa—and from there explored Venice both as pilgrim and as sightseer. Following his valuable account of the Arsenale, a Naval Base designed for rowing galleys and modified in our day to accommodate submarines, he gives some interesting facts about his voyage to Alexandria and, more generally, about Venetian ships and merchants. "Item at the time", he explains, "the council of Venice sends each year fourteen galleys to all countries . . . two to Alexandria, item two to Beiruth, two to Tripoli, item two to Barbary, item two to Constantinople, item two to Jaffa, in which the pilgrims are accustomed to travel every year to Jerusalem, item two to England, item two to Flanders." What is not clear from this list is the comparative numbers of merchantmen and men-of-war. It might appear from the context that all fourteen were trading vessels. But the ship in which Von Harff himself voyaged to Alexandria was clearly a man-of-war, sailing in ballast with a crew, as he says, of five hundred, and acting as escort to the other ship and to a number of merchantmen that sailed in company. Even so, she was a larger vessel, by his account, than one would expect and larger, indeed, than one can altogether credit. In the list, however, of the ship's armament—which is obscure—it is perhaps the translator who is (for once) at fault.

Von Harff, who was neither seaman nor soldier, is more explicit in detailing what he himself, as a passenger, needed for the voyage. More valuable still is his account of commercial transactions; his purchase, for example, of bills of exchange negotiable in Alexandria, Damietta, Damascus, Beiruth, Antioch and Constantinople—bills which were honoured by the merchants, as he says, without question "although they are heathen." At Alexandria, again, he describes the merchant houses or Fondaci kept by the Venetians, Genoese, Catalans, Turks, Moors and Tartars. Religious and national rivalries were evidently no great impediment to trade or to travel. On the shores of the Red Sea, for example, he met ". . . two Genoese merchants who wished to travel to India, to a trading town called Madagascar, in order to traffic there. They were waiting for the ships from India with the spices, in order to travel back with them . . ." This was in 1497, at almost the very time that Da Gama was driving his terrified crew round the Cape. There was apparently no great difficulty about the overland journey. There would probably be far more difficulty now.

Describing the homeward journey, Von Harff noticed at Milan "the loveliest women in all my travels." But Spain he heartily disliked from the moment when, crossing the frontier, he found that he needed to procure a certificate that he had brought "such a horse, of such appearance and size" into the country; a certificate without which his horse would not have been allowed to leave. About France he has little to say, as being too well known, but it was at Paris that he found ambassadors from his master the Duke of Jülich, with whom he travelled back to Cologne in 1499. He had covered nearly 4,000 German miles. It is sad to think that he should have found at home ". . . chatterers . . . who think there are no other countries under the sun except those in which they live . . ." But he had his remedy: he could write a book. And this, fortunately for us, he did.

**SOVIET LAND:** The Country, its People and their Work, by G. D. B. Gray. *A. and C. Black.* 12s. 6d.

Mr. Gray follows the usual lay-out of a geographical survey: structure, climate, soils, vegetation, historical background, population, agriculture and industry, but does not proceed with detailed regional studies. The material is presented in an attractive and readable form; visual aid has been exploited fully in the use of many diagrams, excellent photographs and maps.

The survey of the chief agricultural regions is introduced by an analytical account of the measures which have been taken to improve the balance of agriculture, extend the area under crops and increase yields. Although the outline of historical development ends somewhat abruptly at the New Economic Policy (1921-1928), the economic and financial background to the Five Year Plans is included in the chapter on industry.

It could have been shown that the rapid industrialization resulting from a tight control over consumption in order to further capital accumulation, and the direction of capital into heavy industry, is reflected directly in the age of machinery in use: in 1940, over seventy per cent. of industrial power equipment and up to eighty per cent. of all metallurgical plant had been produced and installed after 1929. While the study of the types and growth of settlements is especially commendable, the division of workers into (a) collective farmers and (b) workers in factories and offices, is quite inadequate; a more detailed occupational distribution would have given some indication of the relative importance of various industries to each other and to the total national income. And in view of the peculiar position which it holds in a planned economy, it is surprising that there is no account of foreign trade.

Most of the information relates to the pre-war years of 1938 or 1940, and only occasionally does Mr. Gray quote more recent figures and developments. The

main criticism of the book, therefore, lies in the fact that it is already out-of-date; none of the material from the Fourth Five Year Plan (1946-1950) is included, although it was made available in March 1946. The new plan shows clearly that although the main task of this period of reconstruction is the restoration of agriculture and industry in the devastated areas, the expansion of economy in the Urals and beyond is to continue. When it is remembered that the industrialization of these eastern areas, which was a feature of the Second (1933-1937) and Third (1938-1942) Five Year Plans, received a forceful impetus from evacuated plant and labour, and grew at an accelerated rate during the war years, it is seen that they can no longer be regarded merely as useful adjuncts to the older industrial areas of the west and south.

The tone of the book is, in general, uncritical, and in view of the necessity of using so much secondary material, and this largely from official Russian sources, this is understandable. There is sufficient evidence elsewhere, however, of wastage of men and material, of technical inefficiency and faulty judgment, of forced labour and suffering, to question the official complacent and *simplicite* exposition of achievement. The statement that the use of convict labour on the construction of the Baltic-White Sea Canal was a "successful experiment" would hardly be confirmed by those who worked there with inadequate food, clothing and shelter, and saw their companions die of privation and disease. As Leonard Hubbard wrote: "humanity becomes the slave of economic progress."

D.E.J.R.

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**THE GREEK DILEMMA**, by William Hardy McNeill. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.

After all, it is not impossible to write impartially of modern Greece. Mr. W. H. McNeill has produced a painstaking and balanced account of Greek affairs from 1812 to the present day. As U.S.

Assistant Military Attaché, Mr. McNeill spent nearly two years in Greece, and he evidently travelled widely. His book is rather in the style of a conscientious official despatch; but on such a controversial subject this dryness is welcome. There is a glossary of Greek political abbreviations. The biographies of prominent figures, such as Zachariades and Zervas, are interesting though colourless.

The author's most valuable contribution to an understanding of the plight of modern Greece, is in his analysis of the economic situation. Greece is chronically over-populated. The soil is cruelly barren. Lack of raw materials and power make industrial development almost impossible. In the past, periodical outbreaks of disease, war and famine eased the over-population. Occasional territorial expansion and constant emigration also helped—but both of these outlets are now firmly closed. Greek specialized products (such as tobacco and currants) form such a large proportion of the country's exports, that any depression abroad has immediate and disastrous effects on the local economy (preventing the import of vital wheat supplies for instance). Remittances from emigrants to their families in the homeland, and income from the merchant marine, formerly almost covered the trade deficit; but the generations of emigrants are gradually dying out, and eighty per cent. of the Greek merchant fleet was sunk in the war. Any attempts at economic recovery to-day are hampered by the greatly increased cost of labour and by the unwillingness of capitalists to risk anything in such unsettled times: "Workmen regard their employers as natural enemies . . . Employers are stout conservatives almost to a man and regard any concession to their workmen as a concession to communism." Yet the fact remains that only by some form of economic alleviation can peace come to the Greek people.

Mr. McNeill suggests that the U.S.A., instead of offering loans, should admit

Greek immigrants. How could Russia help, if Greece became a member of the Communist Federation? The U.S.S.R., says the author, is not at present in a position to send adequate supplies of food, coal, and manufactured goods. The Communist Party might improve discipline in local industry. They might also solve the problem of surplus population by organizing labour gangs for work in the U.S.S.R. Or they might find it necessary to let the Greeks starve.

GEORGE PENDLE.

### AIR POWER AND WAR RIGHTS, by J. M. Spaight. *Longmans*. 25s.

Since the publication of the first edition of this book in 1924, Mr. Spaight has been an acknowledged authority on the air aspect of international law, not only in this country but over a much wider field. The end of the 1939-1945 war, which had led inevitably on the one hand to wide modification of former practice and on the other to the emergence of many new problems, clearly called for a new edition of the work. As a text book for the international lawyer and the air-staff officer the third edition will be invaluable, though it will also have a wide general appeal.

Though the development of an air arm of the importance which it was to attain during the war of 1914-1918 was then unforeseen, a declaration was signed at the Hague in 1907 by a number of nations, including Great Britain and the United States of America, laying down a number of rules regarding air bombardment; the Land Warfare rules signed at the Hague in the same year also deal with a number of air matters. These instruments were never generally ratified, but the problems which arose in practice during the war were, broadly speaking, decided in accordance with them by the various belligerents, though naturally interpretation varied between nation and nation. A commission of jurists, representing six



countries, met at the Hague and produced, in 1923, a set of Draft Air Warfare Rules. Unfortunately, this remained no more than a draft and was never embodied in an international convention, but its existence undoubtedly had a pronounced influence on the practice of belligerents and neutrals in the 1939-1945 war.

Thus the world entered upon its second experience of almost total war still lacking a body of generally accepted law to govern the action of what was clearly going to be an infinitely more important and perhaps the decisive arm in the struggle. During its course, the problems of the first war presented themselves again and found equally varying solutions, but new problems inevitably arose with the introduction of new weapons and new methods of warfare. Of all the new problems, as Mr. Spaight points out, probably the most difficult is that of the status of the "civilian". The conquest of the air has for the first time put into the hands of the belligerent the ability to strike not only at the *users* but also at the *makers* of armaments. Can the latter category, even though they do not wear uniform, claim to be any less combatant than the soldiers who use the guns and ammunition which they have made? Our bomber offensive on the Axis was based on the premise that they cannot and that they are therefore legitimate objects of attack. Despite the frenzied complaints of the Germans, when the day was going against them, that we were making war on the aged and weak and violating the rules of war, there seems every reason to believe that ours is the only logical view to take.

It cannot be denied that the totalitarian character which air power has imparted to modern warfare has introduced a greater degree of brutality than was countenanced under the old rules of civilized war. The task of checking the illegitimate use of the limitless potentialities for destruction is therefore all the more urgent. Engines of war have made their appear-

ance in the course of the conflict whose untrammelled use could only lead to the extinction of civilization. It is a matter of urgent concern that the codification of the rules of air warfare in the light of recent experience and their presentation for acceptance by all members of the United Nations Organization should not be long delayed.

DOUGLAS COLYER.

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**INTERNATIONAL ROAD TRANSPORT:** Postal, Electricity and miscellaneous questions, by Sir Osborne Mance. *Oxford University Press, Geoffrey Cumberlege.* 12s. 6d.

This is the penultimate volume of a useful series on international communications, transport and kindred subjects, emanating from Chatham House. The author is a member of the Transport and Communications Commission of UNO and was a well known figure in international transport circles in those uneasy years between the wars.

The book outlines the conventions and machinery governing international road transport, electricity transmission, pipe lines and postal services, and there are valuable chapters on freedom of transit, aspects of co-ordination of differing forms of inland transport, statistics and customs formalities. It is interesting to trace the real progress that has been made in the twentieth century, and also to note how much remains to be done to achieve the recognition of the principle of freedom of transport. In outlining the difficulties confronting future negotiators the volume is a useful corrective to any complacency that may exist.

If this work assists in the gigantic task of ensuring that future international agreements on transport are based on technical and commercial considerations rather than on political ideologies it will have been very worth while the labour entailed in its preparation.

Once again it can but be regretted that such a well thumbed text book as this

must prove should be bound so indifferently.

HERBERT T. BANYARD.

**COMPANION TO THE PRE-SOCRATIC PHILOSOPHERS,**  
by Kathleen Freeman. *Blackwell*. 25s.

To the Greeks may rightly be given the credit of being the first people to concern themselves with the problems of knowledge and metaphysics. Their importance to us lies, first, in the fact that from them may be dated the beginnings of rational science and the substitution of the study of nature for the acceptance of pure myth; secondly in their conversion—(though the positive value of this change is to some extent a matter of dispute among historians and philosophers)—by Socrates from the study of nature to the study of human life, and in Plato's and Aristotle's interpretation of the world in the light of this new standpoint.

At all times their attempt to understand the world and man had as its aim the conversion of men to the right conduct of life, and this attitude has particular significance in an age which provides plenty of evidence that the burden of bewilderment seems more than too much for those who make any attempt to think seriously.

The essence of all philosophical progress lies in asking the right questions, and to the pre-Socratics must go the particular credit of having asked the question on which all later thought was properly based. Their thought may be described as dominated by the search for something abiding in the state of flux—what Gomperz aptly described as "the permanent element in change"—in fact the simple question: "What are things made of?"

Their answers to this question and indeed the beginning of all such thinking must be of permanent interest to scientists and philosophers alike; and however full or admirable the histories of any period of philosophy may be it is not possible to make any serious study with-

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out adding to such reading some knowledge of original sources. This is not an easy task without guidance, and the present work is the outcome of experience gained in teaching the period generally described as "Early Greek Philosophy".

A selection has been made following the plan of Diels's great work *Fragmente der Vorsokratiken* and presenting what is known of the life and of the teaching of each thinker, with full references to the texts themselves. Though correctly described as a companion to Diels's book, this volume is itself an admirable summary of pre-Socratic thought, wholly satisfactory as a work of reference and (though necessarily more detailed than the general reader would normally require) in itself presenting the complete story from the cosmological and astronomical writers of early times to the days of the sophists whom Socrates came to discomfort.

J. F. BURNET.

### **SUCH IS THE KINGDOM,** by Lord Elton. Collins. 6s.

Lord Elton is convinced, partly by recollections of incidents in his own childhood, that there is a profound truth in Wordsworth's famous Ode. Whatever we may think about pre-existence—and Wordsworth himself did not wish to be classed as a believer in reincarnation—we do, the author thinks, come into this world trailing clouds of glory from the spiritual world. When Christ said that only those who are like little children can enter into the Kingdom of heaven, He meant much more than St. Paul's words, "in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men." He meant what the medieval mystic Julian of Norwich meant when she said: "To me was shewn no higher stature than childhood."

There are children who make it possible to understand this. There are children whose lives are mysteriously irradiated with the beauty of holiness, as if

they were born with a clearer vision of God than most of us can ever hope to acquire. Your reviewer has known one such child in his own family. When he thinks of that short life of eleven years, his mind is full of wonder and deep reverence. It was such a child on whom the epitaph was written: "*Experta vitæ consilium spinis iter Clausit tenellum sumen et vidit Deum.*"

But we must not be too sentimental about childhood, as if such cases were common. The trustfulness and strange fearlessness of the baby prove only that he has known nothing but kindness. My two-year-old grandson on seeing the tiger at Whipsnade shouted affectionately "Pussy!" Most children as they emerge from babyhood show that they have not escaped the taint of original sin. We can all sympathize with the little girl who said: "Mummy, if I am very good in heaven, shall I sometimes be allowed to have a little devil up to play with?" But what of the horrid child who was seen burying a piece of paper in the garden? It proved to be a letter. "Dear Devil, please come and take Aunt Jane. Yours affectionately, Molly."

Poets mature early, and like Wordsworth, Coleridge and even Shelley, lament that the spirit of delight now rarely visits them. But this does not necessarily mean that they have travelled further from the heart's true home. The light of common day may be less lovely than the roseate hues of early dawn; but it is not a threat of darkness.

In middle life undoubtedly a sclerosis of the conscience often sets in. A man has come to take himself as well as his wife for better and for worse. He has made a working agreement with the world, the flesh and the devil. He will serve them in moderation if they do not get him into scrapes. This is the subject of Bourget's striking novel, *Le Démon de Midi*.

In old age there is a reversion to a negative innocence. We have done with the world; the flesh has done with us;



the devil thinks us no longer worth bothering about. But all through life there may be and should be much of the child nature to keep the character sweet and happy.

Lord Elton, following most Christian moralists, finds that pride is the cardinal sin, and thinks that children are humble. But is pride quite the right word for the sin which he abhors? The Pharisee in the parable was not exactly proud. His was a meaner fault—self-satisfaction. St. Paul was not self-satisfied. Luther, in identifying *fides* with *fiducia*, totally misunderstood the source of St. Paul's religion. But was there not some pride in his scornful protest, "with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you or of man's judgment"?

The author surely goes astray when he says, "to be learned or intellectual is not fatal to the perceiving of the things which are, but it is a handicap. On broad issues the ordinary man in his millions is more likely to be right than the expert and the professor." This extraordinary notion may have comforted Lord Elton when he was a Labour candidate at parliamentary elections; but no more deadly advice can be given to an Englishman than to bid him say to Britannia: "Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever." Irrationalism is treason to our highest endowments; to our countrymen, who, as Bishop Creighton says, not only have no ideas but hate an idea when they meet one, it is downright poison.

There are many beautiful thoughts in this book. Why is it that nearly all our good religious books are written by laymen?

W. R. INGE.

**LORD, I WAS AFRAID**, by Nigel Balchin. Collins. 12s. 6d.

**"NOW BARABBAS . . ."**, by William Douglas Home. Longmans, Green. 6s.

In *Lord, I Was Afraid* Mr. Balchin, the writer of *The Small Back Room* and *Mine Own Executioner*, expert and

much praised matter-of-fact novels, has thrown caution overboard, and in order to say what he has to say has given us something which I cannot describe as either a novel or a play; but rather as a huge dramatic fantasy or phantasmagoria, unactable on any stage but with possibilities for broadcasting, mirroring facets in the lives and characters of seven different people who came to maturity between the two world wars. This is Mr. Balchin's criticism of life, or rather of a much tried generation, and he stands before us as showman every now and then shaking his kaleidoscope, producing scenes of allegory, satire, symposium, and implied pleading for values which are valuable and are in danger of disappearing from the contemporary world. This "kind of super-play", as the publishers describe it, is really a burlesque, tragic extravaganza in which the progress of the seven characters, their hopes

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and failures, their disillusion allow almost everything to be presented, as love, marriage, children, faith, war, dictatorship, bureaucracy, business, art, politics, God, and so on.

I do not pretend to have understood Mr. Balchin's whole meaning, for some of the writing is impossibly obscure. But in other well-contrived scenes one guesses his attitude. I liked particularly the scene in the air-raid shelter, the scene where the British and Americans comment on each other through the bars of a zoo, the scene in the post-war department store where there is little to sell and the game of Happy Families is sold as Happy Communities, the session of the Brains Trust—some excellent writing here—and the final scene on the summit of Mount Ararat where Methuselah "sits stroking the head of a baby brontosaurus, and gazing out at the Ark, which rides, very red and green and white and shining, a few hundred yards away." The book is exasperating in parts, and one could wish that it had been shorter. But against much elsewhere that is mediocre and plays for safety, one must salute courage in an author, especially when it is accompanied by great talent.

"*Now Barabbas . . .*" is the text of the play by William Douglas Home, presented in an attractive format, which has already aroused much interest since its two stage productions in London, at Boltons and the Vaudeville, early in 1947. It is illustrated with sixteen photographs by Angus McBean of the West End production, and has a Foreword by Sir Alexander Paterson, H.M. Commissioner of Prisons, which emphasizes its value as a social document of importance. Here the attack, unlike Mr. Balchin's, is direct, and Mr. Home has written a reserved, skilful, and well-carpeted play in which prison life today is shown and its effects on the different characters of the men studied. The cogency of Mr. Home's attack upon our natural human sympathy lies in his compassion, the tenderness and pity with

which he handles his characters, for there is not only sadness, but humour that gives a sense of reality, although as the plot develops with dramatic inevitability the play does become almost unbearably sad. Although the play by reason of this compassion is perhaps more than a documentary, it *is* special pleading, for young Tufnell, in love, inclined to poetry and a romantic love of life and nature, is painted in deliberately attractive colours. He has shot and killed a policeman with a young family, for no more reason than a loss of temper when the policeman was doing his duty. His reprieve is refused, and he is hanged. As another man says on the morning after the hanging: "Taint natural . . . That's what I say, 'taint natural . . . And wot ain't natural, ain't right." One may agree with the author and with Mr. Shaw that the remedy for one murder is certainly not to commit another! But the danger here is in our forgetting the policeman.

JOSEPH BRADDOCK.

### FLAUBERT AND MADAME BOVARY, by Francis Steegmuller. Collins. 12s. 6d.

This is a new edition of a book published in 1939. It does not claim to give a complete biography of Flaubert, for it reaches its climax with the publication of *Madame Bovary* in 1857. The remaining twenty-three years of Flaubert's life, and his subsequent writings, are very briefly considered.

Mr. Steegmuller does not put forward any remarkably original interpretation of Flaubert's greatest novel. The interest of his book lies rather in his account of the circumstances which culminated in its production.

The events of Flaubert's youth and early manhood, his travels and friendships, and his love-affairs, all serve to illustrate the development of his personality, which found its fulfilment in the writing of *Madame Bovary*. In particular, Mr. Steegmuller has brought out the contrast

between Flaubert, with his contempt for fame or popular appraisal, and his friend Maxime Du Camp, the worldly careerist. He has shown too the essential part played by Flaubert's other friend, Louis Bouilhet, who thrust the subject of *Madame Bovary* before him, convinced him that he must set to work upon it, and then served as his adviser and most exacting critic throughout its composition.

A considerable part of the book is concerned with the relationship between Flaubert and Louise Colet, which lasted precariously for nine years, despite their fundamental incompatibility. It may be felt that Mr. Steegmuller has allotted too much space to this chequered story of raptures and reproaches. Certainly a more balanced picture would have resulted if he had amplified his remarks about one whose influence on Flaubert was probably deeper and more lasting. He does, it is true, make some scattered allusions to Flaubert's youthful and long-remembered love for Madame Elisa Schlésinger, but he never mentions her by name. She remains a shadowy figure, and the slight glimpses which are provided of her are not sufficient to make us realize the extent of Flaubert's affection, entirely Platonic although it appears to have been. Similarly one must regret that only one sentence should have been devoted to Flaubert's friendship for George Sand.

The importance of Louise Colet is primarily due to the fact that she became Flaubert's principal correspondent, during some of the most notable years of his life, and that his letters to her are among the most revealing documents that any author has written about himself and his work. The whole process of literary creation is nowhere described more fully than in these letters which he wrote to her while laborious composing *Madame Bovary*.

Mr. Steegmuller has made good use of this material, incorporating in his text a large number of translations from Flaubert's letters and journals, and other con-

temporary sources, especially the *Souvenirs littéraires* of Maxime Du Camp. (He rightly says that Du Camp's information is not always dependable, but he might have made his comment more explicit, and referred to the jealousy and petty malice too often apparent in these memoirs.) As the letters are seldom quoted in their entirety, it would have been useful to indicate the places where they have been abridged, and also to date them more consistently. The translations themselves maintain a very fair level, although occasionally there are some unhappy renderings.

CHARLES GOULD.

### MERCHANT OF ALPHABETS,

by Reginald Orcutt. Jarrolds. 16s.

**CROFT AND CEILIDH**, by Colin Macdonald. Moray Press. 7s. 6d.

Seventy-seven different countries have been visited by Mr. Orcutt, an American,

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who sold the Linotype around the world. From Iceland to Patagonia, from Borneo to Lapland he has travelled as a merchant of alphabets, and one of the few regions he does not seem to have frequented is the Highlands of Scotland, the scene of Mr. Macdonald's interesting book. However, as the Gaelic expresses itself in no exotic alphabet Mr. Orcutt did not feel particularly attracted to it. He would have been very much at home with some of the odd characters of whom we learn in Mr. Macdonald's pages, such as the tinker woman who, in the neighbourhood of Dingwall, begged for a fill of tobacco. It happened that Mr. Macdonald had a friend with him. "Indeed," quoth the friend, "I haven't that for myself. I haven't had a smoke to-day and I can't get one till I reach the town." "Oh, helpless man," exclaimed the tinker woman, "you should never let your tobacco run so low as that," as she handed him a couple of fills.

Mr. Orcutt's observations are often acute and amusing. He has evolved a theory that all Englishmen hate each other until 10.30 a.m. or thereabouts. At breakfast in his London hotel he noticed them sitting aloof at what he calls miniature bridge tables, in impenetrable isolation behind the pages of *The Times*. Silence, he says, is then absolute and smiles are absent—presumably he saw no one reading the fourth leader—not so much, says he, because smiles are prohibited as because they simply could not be. The French and Italian waiters, he thinks, have long given up trying to understand what it is all about. They have learned to move in almost utter silence and seem to have developed a sign language of their own.

The languages with which Mr. Orcutt came into professional contact were, indeed, legion. The public printer of Persia, His Excellency the Arbab Khailkhosrov Sharokh, informed him that, although they use the Arabic alphabet, they have six more letters than are used in Cairo and for every letter four forms:

the letter by itself and the same letter in what they call the primary, the medial and the final form, depending on where it is used in the word. Let it not be thought, however, that Mr. Orcutt's book appeals merely to Linotype experts. It is full of all kinds of information which in the course of his unending travels the author has gathered for our edification. Thus, to return for a moment to Persia, in the time of the late Shah the numerous bandits were swiftly and severely punished when they were caught. They were then taken to the scene of their crime, tied to stakes and walled in up to their necks in concrete, which, in setting, slowly broke their bones and left their hideous skulls as warnings for all to see. One day in Teheran, the capital, Mr. Orcutt's car nearly ran over the prostrate form of a man, who turned out to be drunk. While Mr. Orcutt and the chauffeur were pulling him out of the way they were interrupted by a mullah, or priest, whose green turban showed that he had made the pilgrimage to Mecca. "It is the will of Allah," said this personage, "that the man should lie on the road. He has drunk wine, which is forbidden by the Prophet."

In Albania Mr. Orcutt was advised to take a couple of soldiers on the running board of the car, because if a soldier gets shot by the brigands they have to pay a much heavier penalty than if they shoot other people. We are told that Dr. Salazar's educational programme in Portugal provided the stimulus to printing that brought Mr. Orcutt back to that country; but he does not mention that, in spite of education having been obligatory for a good many years, the proportion of illiterates in Portugal to-day is still very great.

In the Highlands of Scotland, on the other hand, one must admire the general level, whether in the Gaelic or in English or both. Mr. Macdonald brings back the old hilarious days, as in the account of how one Paruig Mor was initiated, after being blindfolded, into the brother-

hood, with the very active assistance of a bullock and a fierce old goat. His solution of the problems of depopulation is to have stags grazing along with sheep and cattle, which appears to have been perfectly successful. Nor can I think of a more successful episode in any book on the Highlands than the striking account of how, as a boy of twelve, Mr. Macdonald took part in the great trek to Ullapool for an overwhelming catch of herrings.

HENRY BAERLEIN.

### HIGHLAND NATURALIST AGAIN, by Dugald Macintyre. *Seeley Service.* 15s.

Many country-lovers will be familiar with *Highland Naturalist*, and Mr. Macintyre has also given us *Highland Gamekeeper* and *Wild Life in the Highlands*.

The value of *Highland Naturalist Again* lies in its particular observation of the unusual in fairly common animals, birds, and fish, and in that it is by no means esoteric, but will interest even those who know little of natural life. This record of a gamekeeper's observations and discoveries is simply and directly written without literary pretensions. The style and short chapters make it easy reading for those outdoor people who regard books as something of a labour.

While adding to common knowledge of wild life, Mr. Macintyre is not dully scientific; he introduces us not to a mere conger, rock pigeon, or fieldmouse, but to the personalities of Snapper, Blue Rock, and Longtail, and their individual adventures. Black-Crest and Skirly, for instance, were green plover who with the migratory flock one autumn lost their southerly direction in a gale, and arrived by mistake in Newfoundland. Viewing the prospect with distaste, this enterprising pair, with family and a few mutineers, made back for Britain, and with

Black-Crest as guide, spent the winter in southern Ireland. In spring the pair returned to their old nest, but Skirly decided to make a new one a few yards away on black peat moss. The ground colour of her eggs became black to match the earth, and the keeper's theory is that this natural camouflage is due to a sort of colour photography done through the eye during the process of egg manufacture.

Another interesting personality is Eyes Right, the flounder, who has both eyes on the right side of his face—he must be as rare as a four-leaved clover, for flounders normally have both eyes on the left side. Anyhow, he eventually mates happily with Eyes Left, and one wonders if his progeny will be "eyed" on the human principle.

Mr. Macintyre gives several examples of maternal courage: there is the mother rabbit who chases a stoat from her burrow, and later hurls herself at a cat. And Hara, the hare who has two leverets, charges at large dogs on two occasions and frightens them away. Then Fulica, the bellicose coot, splashes defiance at a keeper, and has the nerve to repeat this performance for the benefit of a peregrine falcon.

There is a fascinating account of a greater black-backed gull catching a crab by a claw, rising with him, and dropping him on the rocks until he is in a suitable condition for his captor's lunch. Hiero, the Iceland gerfalcon, whose mating call is aptly described as like "the clang of falling metal", ate a herring gull a day one winter. He employs the "grip and let go" method of killing, for he will drag the screaming gull through the air, release it, and kill it in his next swoop.

These are only a few of the wide fields of interest covered by Mr. Macintyre in a book which is well produced and well printed, and illustrated by several excellent photographs.

PHOEBE HESKETH.



## BOOKS ON THE TABLE

SOME eighteen months ago in another place this reader made a wish that publishers would reprint some of those largely hearsay representative books of the nineteenth century, so that this generation might judge for itself. Since then the fairy wand seems to have waved in duplicate, sometimes in triplicate, and now comes an edition of *AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY* by Anthony Trollope, this time published by *Cambridge University Press*: *University of California Press* (21s.). Bradford A. Booth, who edits the American magazine *The Trollopian*, writes an Introduction which is all the more valuable for keeping "this side idolatry". Probably unwittingly, Professor Booth also confirms the long-held suspicion that this might be Trollope's best book. To re-read the chapters on the art of writing novels, on English novelists and on criticism is to be impressed again by the durability of many of his predictions and of the commonsense of most of his opinions. And, is it only prejudice that detects a note of pride in his self-castigation as he writes of his own magazine?

... and still it is *THE FORTNIGHTLY*. Of all the serial publications of the day, it probably is the most serious, the most earnest, the least devoted to amusement, the least flippant, the least jocose,—and yet it has the face to show itself month after month to the world, with so absurd a misnomer.

### Enjoying work

In *I DO WHAT I LIKE* (Macdonald, 15s.) W. A. Darlington seems to have found the perfect title. Though written in a world that Trollope never knew, Mr. Darlington's autobiography has much the same *raison d'être* as that of Trollope. To have seen the theatre from both sides of the footlights and to have kept the enchantment is the happy lot of the author of *Alf's Button* and the dramatic critic of *The Daily Telegraph*. This book is full of good stories, recourse to which (in those future moments when one says: 'W. A. Darlington's character study of

Marie Tempest is an eye-opener' or 'W.A.D. was so kind to Gordon Craig—I'll find it for you') will be extremely difficult because of lack of index. But perhaps this was omitted purposely, for fear its inclusion should imply only theatrical chit-chat. How much more is in the book may be judged by the irrefutability of the author's lighthearted observations, as this: "Any clever fool can sneak into a reputation by picking holes, but a critic must stand or fall by what he admires."

### Some yesterdays

Two more books within the realm of autobiography are on the table. The first is *THE DAY BEFORE YESTERDAY* by R. A. Scott-James (*Frederick Muller*, 10s. 6d.), in the form of a diary from October 1934 to April 1939, of editorial articles from *The London Mercury*. Concerned though each was with literature, the arts and "kindred questions which touch the life of the mind or kindle the imagination," the shadow of things to come already overhung the civilized preoccupations. Mr. Scott-James's book is full of such intimations as, for example, in February 1937: "The poets are thinking it their duty to drop poetry and write tracts." It is hard to put this kind of history down; there is the fascination of horror in greeting again those apprehensions which in the 'thirties tinged all our pleasures.—*THE LETTERS OF PHILIP MEADOWS TAYLOR* to his cousin, Henry Reeve, edited with an Introduction by Sir Patrick Cadell (*Oxford University Press*, 16s.), is the second book. Naturally the author of *The Confessions of a Thug* was primarily interested in military and political affairs, arising out of his duties with the army of the Nizam of Hyderabad. General Fraser selected him to take charge of the feudal state of Shorapur and Taylor's tact and patience served his country well. The letters cover the period from 1840 to 1849 and



the editor's notes at the head of each greatly enhance their value in non-military eyes.

### Europe and Bath

The architecture of India is sometimes reminiscent of the interiors illustrated in *JEWISH ART IN EUROPEAN SYNAGOGUES* by George Loukomski (*Hutchinson. Three Guineas*). This is perhaps accounted for by Cecil Roth when he explains that the "decoration of certain Central Eastern and European Synagogues, hitherto regarded as a local peculiarity, points back to a remote antiquity." Dr. Roth contributes a scholarly Historical Introduction to this lavishly produced volume, which in these meagre times is a delight to handle. The lists, the cataloguing of the various national styles and, above all, the hundreds of photographs and drawings make the book an authoritative history of a relatively little known branch of art. And it would not be surprising if those Jewish friends who do not already possess it should give this reader the pleasure of lending the book.—Back to familiar architecture with *THE BUILDING OF BATH* 47-1947 by Bryan Little (*Collins. 15s.*). There cannot be too many books written on, or too many photographs taken of, that treasured city and this, "an architectural and social study", holds its own with the array on the bookshelf. In truth, it goes further than most, with a penultimate chapter on "Modern Bath" and a final one that takes a long look into the future with "The New Plan".

### A nightmare

It would be something like sacrilege to include the next book with the two last, so, as if it had the measles, it is segregated. It is of course closely allied in theme but in style is one of those determinedly funny American books. MR. BLANDINGS BUILDS HIS DREAM HOUSE by Eric Hodgins, and illustrated by William Steig (*Michael Joseph. 10s. 6d.*), is about the struggle to convert a "sweet old farmhouse" into a habitation. When it

is *not* being determined it is very funny indeed; Mrs. Blandings' desire for thirty-two cupboards will wake an echo in every feminine chest, and for once the 'blurb' finds hearty agreement when it describes the encounters between man and landlord the world over as "the machinery of jungle ethics and slaughter-house manners." Mr. Steig's drawings seem to typify the sort of person who *would* have 'Blandings' for a surname.

### The poet's gift

*THE DERELICT DAY* by Alan Ross (*John Lehmann. 5s.*) is a return to the reality that the Americans who were at home during the two wars never knew. These poems were written by a naval officer in Western Germany between June 1945 and July 1946. Thus they owe their inspiration to the first year of occupation; the atmosphere, sombre, desolate, hopeless, is poignantly conveyed from that land where the "cratered cities are already history" and so acute is the poet's power of observation that his handling of other themes, not merely for escapist reasons, is anticipated.—*Arthur Ball in SEA ACRES* (*Peter Ratazzi, 216 High Street, Slough. 2s. 6d.*) also displays that gift for seeing which is so special to the poet. His fifty-seven poems range widely and the contrasts are well seen in "Air Raid Garden: 1943" and in lines from "To John Milton":

In solitude man finds a populace,  
His silence is a poetry of sleep  
When, through the trance, might rise some  
poet's face  
Like yours, half chiselled marble, half pure  
light.

### From the original

In their Preface to *TRANSLATION* (*Phoenix Press. 10s. 6d.*) the editors, Neville Braybrooke and Elizabeth King, discuss the stimuli that denote a good translation of poetry. This book has the usual effect of stimulating one reader's regret that she cannot read Heine and Dante in the original and many Frenchmen but stumblingly. Classical, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Spanish-American, Brazilian, French, Dutch, German, Czech,

Croatian, Estonian, Russian and Hebrew poems are represented and the many well known names of the translators should reassure the timid that here is no work from writers called 'hack'.

### Selected Items

There is a tendency to prefabricate, or pre-digest, the work of the giants which seems to be yet another sign of the current inability—on the part of the public, of course—for sustained effort. So the next two books are recommended, by one who takes her poets 'neat', not for the poems they contain but for the essays of the compilers. The first is SHELLEY IN ITALY, an Anthology with an Introduction by John Lehmann (*The Chiltern Library: John Lehmann*. 8s. 6d.) and the second THE POETRY OF THE BROWNINGs, an Anthology compiled by Clifford Bax (*Fredrick Muller*. 10s. 6d.). Of course it is true that "while Shelley was in Italy he composed some of the greatest poetry that exists in the English language" but his previous work had been pointing out the upward way—the leaf is no less interesting as a study than the flower. Mr. Lehmann's essay, however, is a real contribution to the thought on Shelley as man and, what matters, as poet. The classification of the book in the shelves is going to be hard; tearing out John Lehmann and putting him with the Blunden, the Maurois and the others, and throwing the rest, which the full collection nearby makes redundant, on the fire seems to be the solution. The same treatment might be accorded the second book were it not that Mr. Bax scatters his most perceptive sayings among the poems. He engenders a warm feeling of gratitude as he points to the beauties in Elizabeth Barrett's writings (he is hereby informed that at least one more person has read the whole of *Aurora Leigh*) and he saves Robert from the Brownings with most convincing reasons for the obscurities. Particularly potent is the suggestion that "Browning began writing in order to dis-

cover what he wanted to say."

If either anthologist should plead that the lesser evil is to entice an uncaring generation to read "selections" than to leave it in complete ignorance, in this peculiar age the justice of the plea must be granted.

### Sugared history

The carping note creeps over into the last paragraph: the historical novel also gets a black mark from this reader; nevertheless, though preferring history 'straight', she is very willing to be proved unreasonable. THE BLACK ROSE by Thomas B. Costain (*Staples Press*. 8s. 6d.) had a sale in the United States of over 1,500,000 copies, which fact is contemplated with ever-deepening gloom; a million and a half Americans can't be wrong. The publishers say that the story sprang out of Mr. Costain's "fascination for two magnificent figures of the thirteenth century who lived at opposite ends of the world: Bayan of the Hundred Eyes, the greatest, most colourful general of the Mongol armies, and Roger Bacon of England, the most famous of early scientists. To fill in the background with authentic details, Mr. Costain read or consulted over 500 books as well as numerous documents and diaries. He even employed a Chinese scholar and a research worker who could read medieval Latin and French. But when he came to weave his tale around real people and events, he found his imaginary characters running away with the story and turning history into high adventure and romance. The result is a superb love story . . ." (Ay, there's the rub!) This lengthy quoting is fairer than an attempt to assess the book from one who has only managed to read two-thirds of it in time for press. If she finds her first impressions of pretentiousness, or wordiness over the unimportant, are erroneous, and if the Editor agrees, she will gladly recant in the next number of THE FORTNIGHTLY.

GRACE BANYARD.